

Gc  
974.302  
B780

Gc  
974.302  
B78o  
1258931

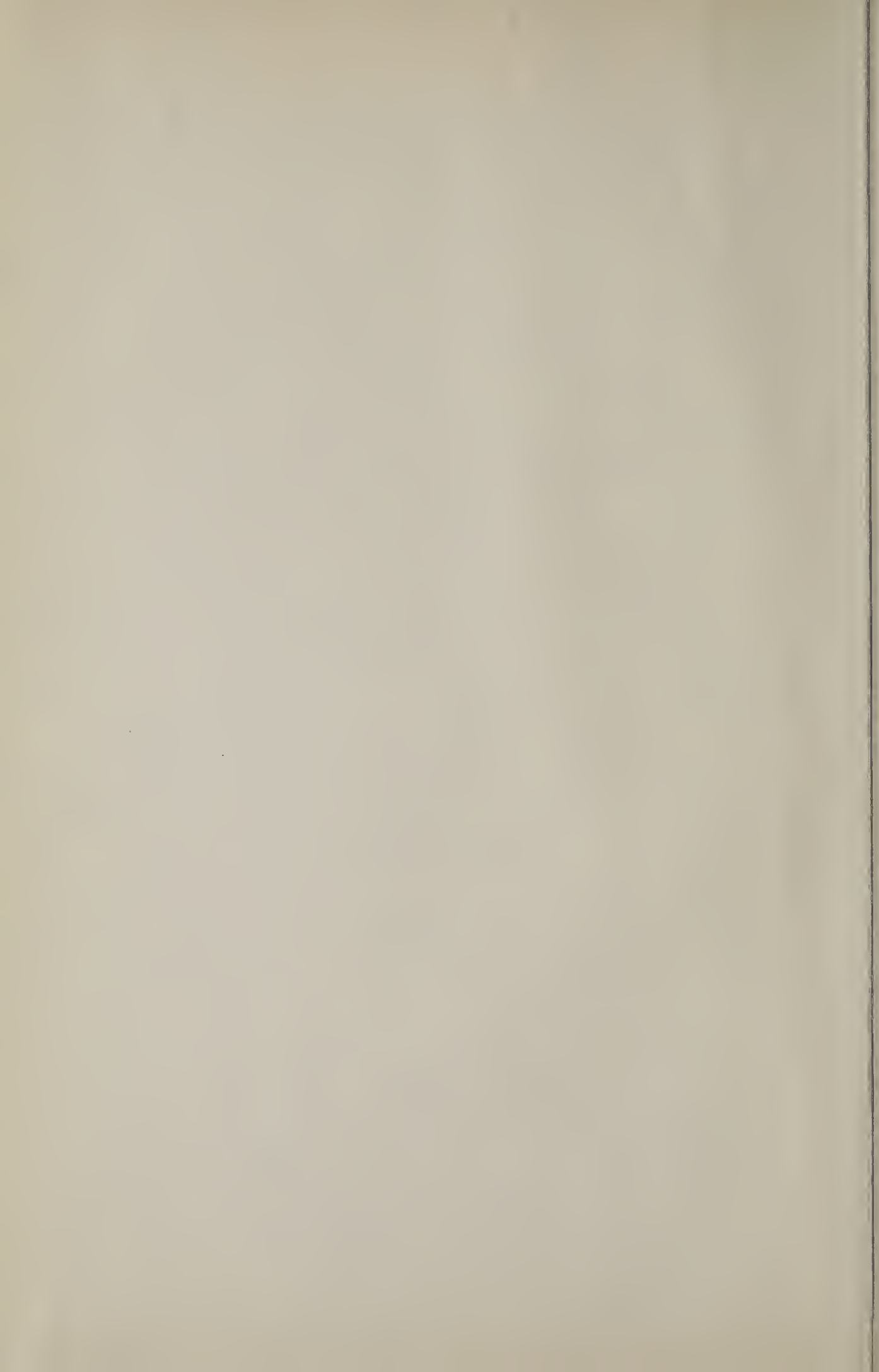
M.L.

GENEALOGY COLLECTION

ALLEN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 1833 01096 2766







HISTORY

of

BRISTOL, VERMONT

1762-1959

\* \* \* \*

Compiled by

OUTLOOK CLUB OF BRISTOL, VERMONT

\* \* \* \*

2nd Edition — 1959

*Bertha H. Estes*

*Frances P. Kneeland*

*Helen N. Trombley*

\* \* \* \*

1st Edition — 1940

Carrie Harvey

Clara Kellogg

## Index

	Page
Early History .....	5
Holley Hall .....	6
Indians .....	8
Bristol Herald .....	8
Bristol Railroad .....	9
Plank Road .....	10
Floods .....	11
Pageant .....	11
Manufacturing .....	13
The Little Notch .....	18
Churches and Cemeteries .....	21
Education — Schools .....	25
Library .....	28
Utilities — Electric Lights .....	30
Telephone .....	31
Water System .....	34
Munsill Hose Co. ....	34
Business Center .....	36
Post Office .....	36
Hotel .....	38
Buildings .....	39
Band .....	39
Bank .....	41
Military .....	41
People of Note .....	44
Homes .....	52
Lodges and Societies .....	54
Interesting Spots .....	58
Recreation .....	62

## Pictures

Hotel .....	4
Bristol Railroad and Holley Hall .....	7
Manufacturing Co. ....	12
Federated Church and Lawrence Memorial Library .....	20
Bristol Academy and Churches .....	24
N. H. Munsill Hose House and Masonic Temple .....	29
Map of Bristol 1871 .....	32
150th Anniversary of Bristol .....	35
Aerial View of Village .....	40
The Maples — Home of the late Merritt Allen .....	43
Old Homesteads .....	48
Common and Champlain Bridge Celebration .....	53
Lord's Prayer Rock .....	57
Lake Winona (Bristol Pond) .....	61



1258931

BRISTOL ROCK

*Sheltered by Vermont's Green Mountains,  
On a road to Bristol Town,  
Close beside the curving highway,  
Stands a rock of great renown.  
Travelers, who pass before it —  
(Those whose faith is not quite dead) —  
Gaze with awe and admiration,  
Then, in reverence, bow their heads.  
On its broad face, tipped toward heaven,  
Keeping holy vigil there, —  
Carved in letters of rare beauty,  
Is inscribed our dear Lord's Prayer.  
Grateful are the hearts of Christians,  
To our dear friend, Dr. Greene,  
We pray that rock will never crumble  
'Till all mortal eyes have seen.  
He inscribed it for God's children,  
To remind them, 'long the way,  
That their lives are in His keeping,  
And they should not cease to pray.*

Georgia F. Healy



Hotel and Main Street - before automobiles



Bristol Inn



## Early History

On June 26, 1762, a charter was granted, for a township lying largely upon the mountains and situated in the northwestern section of Addison County, by the Colonial Governor of New Hampshire, Benning Wentworth, under King George III by His Excellency's command and advise of Council to Samuel Averill and sixty-two associates, under the name of Pocock. This name was given in honor of a distinguished English admiral. The township did not retain this name but for only a few years and on October 27, 1789, the name was changed to Bristol, by an act of the Legislature. No reason can be found in town or state papers why it was given this name. The Charter deed contained the usual restrictions incident to the Wentworth Grants — propagation of the Gospel, etc., and fixed the boundary lines of the new town which gave it more than the area of a full township or 23,600 acres. This area was curtailed by the Legislature, November 18, 1824, when a portion of land or 4,400 acres was set off to the town of Lincoln, leaving the area of Bristol, 19,200 acres.

Bristol is bounded on the north by Monkton and Starksboro, on the east by Starksboro and Lincoln, south by Middlebury, and west by New Haven. On the eastern side, running the entire length of the town is a spur of the Green Mountains, composed of three separate mountains, known locally as Hogsback, South and Elephant. The only stream of importance is the New Haven River, which enters Bristol on the north-east from Lincoln and follows a southwest course into New Haven. Two small streams, both tributaries of the New Haven river are O'Brien Brook in the south part of town and Baldwins Creek in the north. There is a small pond in the northern part of Bristol known as Bristol Pond or Lake Winona. Bristol is 571 feet above sea level.

The first settlement in Bristol was begun in 1786 by Samuel Stewart and Eden Johnson whose wives were sisters. The two families came together from Skenesboro (now Whitehall) New York. Mr. Johnson traveled by land to drive the cattle while the rest came as far as Vergennes by boat. They erected the first building in town, a log cabin, which they occupied jointly until Mr. Stewart could build another one for his family. Mr. Stewart's daughter, Polly, was the first white child born in Bristol.

Although the Stewart and Johnson families are considered the first permanent settlers, when a committee of proprietors surveyed the town in 1785 they met a man who gave his name as John Brodt and said he had lived in the place for twelve years since he fled from New York state, a fugitive. A pardon was secured for him and he returned to New York, leaving no mark of his stay in Bristol. He had erected only a crude shelter for himself and cleared no land other than a small patch where he raised a few vegetables.

The first male child born in Bristol was Horace Griswold, son of Benjamin Griswold. The first marriage was that of Samuel Brooks and Betsy Rorapough, an Indian woman. This took place on March 16, 1791.

According to the restrictions of the charter there was one that as soon as fifty families had settled in the town they would be allowed to hold a meeting and organize. Each grantee of land must in a reasonable length of time, cultivate five out of every fifty acres and must live on it and improve it. The first proprietors' meeting on record was held at the home of Benjamin Griswold in Pocock, March 3, 1788. Miles Bradley

was chosen moderator and Henry McLaughlin, proprietors' clerk. The original survey of the town made in 1785 was reported and accepted and a tax of \$2.00 was laid on each proprietor's right, to pay the expenses of surveying and laying out roads and bridges. A committee consisting of Timothy Rogers, Miles Bradley, Justin Allen, Cyprian Eastman and Henry McLaughlin was chosen to lay out and care for the highways and bridges. The meeting was adjourned until May 13 when the proprietors were to meet at the home of Benjamin Paine in Addison. At this meeting, it was voted to lay out ninety acres to each right as the first division. The last meeting of the proprietors was held in 1816 but from 1795 to 1815 no proprietors' meetings are recorded.

It is evident that meetings were held prior to the one on March 3, 1788, for at that meeting the report of the surveyors, who were chosen in 1784 or '85 was given and these two statements are found in secondary sources — "In the year 1785 John Willard, Jonathan Hoit, and Miles Bradley were appointed a committee by the proprietors to survey the township" and "It is believed that a proprietors' meeting was held in 1784 in Canaan, Conn."

The first Town Meeting was held in Bristol at the home of Justin Allen, March 2, 1789. Henry McLaughlin was chosen moderator and town clerk; Amos Scott, treasurer; Justin Allen, constable; Cyprian Eastman, Samuel Stewart, and Robert Dunshee selectmen. The second annual meeting was held March 23, 1790 and a more complete list of town officers was chosen. They chose three listers, tax collector, leather sealer, grand juror, pound keeper, tything man, two haywards, three fence viewers, three highway surveyors and a sealer of weights and measures.

**Holley Hall** — It is apparent that the residents of Bristol found the town room in the school building unsatisfactory and at a special meeting May 24, 1882 they voted to sell the town room and all its appointments to the school district for \$480.00. March 6, 1883, at the annual meeting it was voted to appoint a committee of three to investigate the matter of building a town hall. Their report, which was to have been given in May, was not given until July. At the meeting at that time Mrs. Cornelia Holley Smith, daughter of Winter Holley and granddaughter of Robert Holley who settled in Bristol in 1795, offered to give the town the land on which her father's store had stood, providing that they would build a town hall upon that site within the next three years. The offer was accepted, the building was completed in September, 1884 and was named Holley Hall after Mrs. Smith's father. It is a brick building with a clock in the belfry. The big room inside where town meetings are held has a seating capacity of 500. For many years it was rented to churches and various organizations whenever a large auditorium was needed. Until 1930 when the school auditorium and gymnasium was built it was rented to the school for all public gatherings and had served for eight years as a place of basketball practice and games. From about 1910 to 1917 Mr. Flagg of Brandon rented the hall one or two nights a week for moving pictures. In 1930 sound equipment was installed for talking pictures which were shown here for two years. Until 1933 rentals showed a favorable margin over running expenses but now there are comparatively few rentals. In 1929 two rooms were finished off in the basement for a town clerk's office and a vault was installed to hold the town records. A cement walk on the south and east sides of the hall was laid at this time.

When the old school building became inadequate to hold the enlarged number of pupils, a room was finished off in the basement to take





Holley Hall



Bristol Railroad - Train and Ticket Station

care of the overflow. In 1958 this room was no longer used as the addition to the new school on Mountain Street was large enough for the children.

**Early Indians and Their Artifacts Around the Town of Bristol —** Writers of the early history of Bristol describe the Indians in the usual way, commenting on their straight black hair, fierce countenances, reddish complexions, good form, and straight limbs. One writer added the interesting comment that Indians considered the cultivation of the land for squaws and hedgehogs and not for men who were made for war, hunting, and holding council. So the chief implements of the men were bows, arrows, and tomahawks. These have been found in abundance in Bristol.

When the first settlement was made in Bristol in 1786 there were discovered many small places which had the appearance of having been cleared and afterwards grown up and covered with a second growth of timber, grass, and weeds. In these places there was found a profusion of arrow points and spear heads. Gorges and pestles were also found. One unusual object discovered in one of these clearings was a stone resembling a rolling pin. Later settlers questioned an old Indian nearly a hundred years of age about the use of this particular instrument and he told them it had been used in dressing deer. Another unusual object which the settlers showed the Indian was also used in the dressing of deer. This former stone is now in the museum in Middlebury. A gorge found in Bristol is now in a museum in Hartford, Connecticut.

At one particular place there was evidence of the wholesale manufacture of arrow points as there were many perfect arrow heads, some only partly finished, and a large quantity of broken fragments. The Rev. C. F. Muzzy, a graduate of Middlebury College in 1833 examined some of these stones and stated that they were formed from quartz rock, slate, and feldspar, all indigenous to this section of the country. Phillip E. Tucker of Vergennes stated that he had in his possession some arrow heads which were black jasper. Mr. Tucker was of the impression that the spears found in this vicinity were used to spear fish and not human beings.

After the English arrived in this section of the country, the Indians secured iron tomahawks; they also got firearms from the French. Of course, they also obtained the powder horn and shot bag as part of their equipment when the white man came.

The old Indian questioned about the relics found about Bristol Pond and other places in this vicinity stated he had never used a stone arrow or spear head, but had heard of others possessing them. He said he had heard discussions about how these stone implements were made, but he had never seen any of them used. He said he had always even in his youth used a steel arrow point made in the same shape as the stone arrow point. So it must be presumed that the very first settlers of Bristol were indeed aborigines in the true sense of the word since they were even before the Indians who used the steel arrow point.

**Bristol Herald —** Bristol was without a paper published in town until 1879. In the Spring of that year, Myron F. Wilson who had worked for the Burlington Free Press and who wanted a paper of his own, came to Bristol with his three sons, Myron W., James and Ben, at the direction of Solon Burroughs of Vergennes. They were well pleased with the reception given them and set up their hand press in rooms over the Bush and Patterson store where the first Bristol Herald was printed in May



1879. A fourth son, Preston K., who had been working in Minnesota soon joined the staff.

The second Herald office was in the Drake-Farr block and the third and last location was on South Street. The paper was always printed under the firm name of Wilson Bros., but before it had reached its fiftieth anniversary Ben and P. K. Wilson had died and James' son, Donald, had entered the firm. In the late Spring of 1929 the Herald was sold to Ralph Merritt, editor of the Middlebury Register and the Bristol Herald Co., Inc. In 1934 the Brandon Union was joined with these two and the Publishing Co. was then known as the Otter Valley Press. In 1947 the Bristol Herald was sold to Rockwood Publications of Vergennes, who publishes it today. Myron W. died in 1930, and James in 1941.

In 1935 Donald J. Wilson started the Bristol Press in the rear of what is now Way's Hardware store. In 1938 he moved his shop to the rear of his home on Maple Street, where it is today.

In 1945 his son, Donald E., on return from five and one half years of military duty with the Air Force and a year spent in a German prison camp, joined his father. They have gradually modernized the whole printing plant, added automatic machinery and additional buildings, and in 1953 added a Silk Screen Plant, "Vermont Silk Screen Co." In July 1956 "The New England Printer" magazine published an article on this plant, tracing its growth from hand press to its present status of being one of the few plants in New England and the only one in Vermont featuring letterpress, offset, and silk screen under one roof.

Donald E. Wilson is the fourth generation in this line of printers.

In 1890, three years before his death, feeling that he did not have much longer to live, Myron F., the founder of the "Bristol Herald", conceived the idea of utilizing the iron arch from the 125 year old Tuff press which he had used for so many years, as a base for the marble headstone set on the Wilson lot in Greenwood Cemetery. This unique idea of Mr. Wilson received notice in the "Newspaper News," printed in Sydney, Australia. It has also appeared in Ripley's "Believe it or not" series.

**Bristol Railroad** — The Bristol Herald, soon after its establishment, began a vigorous campaign for a railroad to connect Bristol with the Rutland Railroad. Several meetings were held in the early eighties to discuss the subject, after which J. J. Ridley introduced a bill in the legislature incorporating the Bristol Railroad Company. In 1890 a survey was made of the route and on November 11, 1890, a special town meeting was held and six men were authorized to issue \$15,000 worth of bonds to aid in the construction of the road. Work was begun on the road bed in 1890, but much trouble was experienced with those in charge of the work and for a few months all activity ceased. Apparently the plan was doomed to failure, but it was taken up again by P. W. Clement of Rutland who took charge of the project and finished it in January, 1892. The first train ran from Bristol to New Haven Junction, January 5, 1892, in charge of R. S. Smith who was superintendent of the road.

One amusing incident is gleaned from the Bristol Herald's account of the first trip, which records the fact that it took only twenty-five minutes to make the trip to the Junction, but it required thirty minutes to return because the up-grade at Tucker's Crossing was too much for the engine, which was soon replaced by a new and more powerful one. The new engine, gilt trimmed, bore the inscription "Bristol Railroad, No. 1" in bold letters and was a two-way one with a cow catcher at

each end.

In 1893 a depot was built at Bristol and like everything connected with the railroad, no expense was spared in its construction for the road was built for permanency. Two stops were made between Bristol and the Junction, at Tucker's Crossing and New Haven Village, where simple shelters were erected. A third shelter was erected at Hubbard's Crossing where stops were made.

For several years the Bristol Railroad was very successful, but its passenger service declined as the use of automobiles increased and in its last years the Railroad depended almost entirely on its freight service. When the manufacturing in Bristol began to decline, the road became a liability and was discontinued in 1930.

This affected the transportation of two vital necessities, coal and milk. The railroad was the medium through which P. W. Clement of Rutland had furnished coal to Bristol. After the road was discontinued in 1930, the coal business was purchased by C. E. Lathrop and G. E. Jackman and known as the Jackman Coal & Coke Company. The Whiting Milk Company continued to operate for a short time after the road closed, sending the milk to Rutland by truck, but it soon closed the Bristol plant.

The memory of the Bristol Railroad brings with it the memory of Levi Bates, one of Bristol's most loyal citizens. He was connected with the Railroad for twenty-eight of its thirty-eight years of service, first as conductor and later as station agent.

The names of two other men, who labored faithfully for the Bristol Railroad come to mind — Ralph Denio, who loyally served the Railroad for twenty-five years as superintendent and Fred LaParl, who was engineer for about fifteen years.

**Vergennes-Bristol Plank Road** — In 1850 a group of Vergennes and Bristol citizens formed a company for the purpose of building a plank road from Bristol to Vergennes. This company, known as the Vergennes and Bristol Plank Road Company was composed of Datus Gaige, Luman Munson, Solon Burroughs, Samuel Holley, Harvey Munsill, Elias Botum, William White, Samuel Strong, William Parker, Samuel Morgan, William Pope, William Worth 2nd, John Roberts, Benjamin Ferris, Mosely Hall, Carlton Stevens, Henry Spaulding and Hiram Adams. The franchise was granted them November 9, 1850, and they began the construction of the road at once. This road started west from North Street just above the place where the depot was later located and continued past what is now the Catholic cemetery and the Wright Ferguson corner north of New Haven Street, from which it followed an almost straight line to Vergennes, coming out on the road a little east of the city, a distance of approximately seven miles. The planks and sleepers in this road were made from virgin pine. Nine years later the company was released from all obligation to keep the road planked and was allowed to repair the road with earth and gravel in the usual manner of repairing turnpikes. It is evident that the planks had all worn out in that space of nine years and the toll did not pay for the upkeep of the dirt road so in 1861 the company was allowed to surrender the charter and the turnpike. Mr. Frederick Wood in "Turnpikes of New England" says the very few plank roads in New England were all located in Connecticut and Vermont, with the exception of one in Massachusetts. The Otter Creek Fish and Game Club have recently purchased some land bordering this road for the development of a recreation area. This is at the site



of the Vergennes Reservoir.

In 1855 the Vermont Legislature granted a charter to a company planning to construct a toll road from Bristol to Huntington. In 1860 a company was incorporated to establish a turnpike from Bristol to Fayston. No further record of these two roads is available so it seems evident that for some reason the projects were abandoned. However in 1957 a road known as the McCullough Highway was completed, connecting Bristol and Fayston.

**Bristol Floods** — The flood of 1830 was the most disastrous which had occurred in Vermont up to that time. No lives were lost in Bristol but the property loss to town and individuals was very heavy. The forge built in 1802 by Franklin, Munsill, Arnold and Beal, which was located on the spot where one of the Bristol Manufacturing Company's buildings later stood, was just completing its fourth cycle of seven years each, and was swept away. After this it was never rebuilt. Ten bridges were destroyed and the road just below the spot where Baldwin Creek joins New Haven River was completely removed together with trees and stones, weighing from 25 to 30 tons, and carried down stream some distance by the force of the torrent.

In the flood of 1869 the Stewart gristmill and Howden and Bosworth sawmill were swept away and their big mill damaged. It has been said that the bridge there was also destroyed but this cannot be verified.

In 1897 a thunder shower raised the streams to flood proportions. The bridge by the Bristol Manufacturing Company, the Cold Spring covered bridge and one on the O'Brien Brook in South Bristol were all destroyed.

In the flood of 1927 the chief property loss was to the Frary Mill, the Drake and Smith Company and the Fred Hammond farm, where the A. Johnson Lumber Company is now located, on Bristol Flats.

In 1938 a hurricane swept over a large part of New England but in this section damage was done, not by the wind but by the water which again rose to flood proportions. The Bristol-Lincoln road was washed out for a long distance. From the point where this road leaves Route 116 as far as Lincoln Center there was nothing left but rocks and portions of the river bed except for occasional sections. This made it very inconvenient for traffic to and from Lincoln for some time as a long detour was necessary. The approximate cost of repair to the town of Bristol was \$20,000. At this time the Cold Spring bridge was again ruined and the road from the bridge to the foot of Prime Hill was torn away. Several smaller bridges were also destroyed. The damage to the A. Johnson Lumber Company is described elsewhere. The high bank which lies along the south side of West Street above the New Haven river was undermined by the high water and sections of it fell into the river, taking with them one garage and threatening the safety of several houses on that side of the street. Beginning by the Bristol Manufacturing Company a retaining wall of hemlock logs has been built along the river to hold back the bank for a distance of a quarter of a mile. Beyond this a wall of stones was laid by the state, for the highway was threatened.

**Community Pageant 1921** — August 25, 1921, a community pageant portraying the history of Bristol was staged on the grounds of "The Maples," the home of Mr. and Mrs. Thorpe Thomas. Approximately 150 people, many of them descendants of the early settlers of Pocock, as the town was first known, took part in the pageant which was sponsored by the Outlook Club. Among other historical scenes which were staged was



**Bristol Manufacturing Company**



**Annual supply of Logs for B. M. Co.**



one which showed an Algonquin encampment. These Indians were supposed to be the first visitors to the present town of Bristol. Following this a scene was enacted portraying the incidents of John Brodt's stay in Bristol. Brodt, who was an escaped convict from New York State, was the first white settler in the town and lived here for twelve years with only a dog for a companion. Brodt was discovered by Captain Bradley and some other surveyors who told him about a cabin only a short distance from his hideout which was occupied by two pioneers, Samuel Stewart and Eden Johnson. In the next scene Bradley was shown presenting Brodt with a pardon which he had secured from the State of New York after which Brodt left Pocock to return to his former home.

After these historical episodes there was an interlude of folk dancing, the music being furnished by an orchestra of eight pieces.

The next scene portrayed the legend of the "Money Diggings" beginning with the coming of the old Spaniard, DeGrau, to Bristol and his tale of accompanying some Spaniards when he was a very small boy to the spot at the foot of South Mountain where he claimed silver had been mined and hidden.

An old fashioned singing school was next conducted by Judge Erwin Hasseltine and the "pupils" who took part in it were dressed in old fashioned garments which had been laid away for years in the attics of the town.

Other interesting scenes were the appearance of Colonel N. F. Dunshee, nearly 90 years old, who as a young boy had joined the California Gold Rush in 1849, and the re-enactment of the first wedding in town when Samuel Brooks took for his bride an Indian maiden, Betsy Rorapough.

The last historical incident to be shown was that of planting trees to beautify the streets which had been done by Harvey Munsill and his niece, Rose Moore.

The pageant was closed by a minuet and grand ensemble in which about 150 persons participated, dressed in old-fashioned clothes and Indian costumes. The pageant was repeated the evening of August 26 and was attended by a large audience as it had been the previous evening.

## Manufacturing

**Manufacturing in Bristol** — Manufacturing in Bristol, as in any newly settled township, was first limited to the wants of the inhabitants so that the first mills to appear were sawmills, gristmills, and forges. The first gristmill of which there is a record is a gristmill which was built in 1792 by three brothers, John, William and James O'Brien. This mill was built in the southern part of the town on the brook which now bears their name. The first sawmill was built by Amos Scott in 1791. Forges were built in various parts of town for the making of bar iron, the ore being brought from the Monkton ore bed and from Crown Point, New York, the latter being a heavier ore which was combined with the Monkton ore in smelting. The bar iron thus made was used in making plow shares, crowbars, cart and wagon tires and many other tools and necessities. Some of the forges made more bar iron than was used in Bristol, and neighboring towns were supplied with the product.

There was an iron mine in the western part of the town. Rowland Robinson in his book, "Three Rivers," mentions this mine and says that

ore was taken from it to make the cannon balls used by the American fleet in the Battle of Lake Champlain.

Eight forges in all were built, and the history of the one built in 1802 by Henry Franklin, Captain Gurdon Munsill, John Arnold and Obadiah Beal is so interesting that we quote an account of it from Harvey Munsill's history: "This forge did a good and profitable business for about seven years until the month of June, 1809, when it was burnt. This forge after it was rebuilt did a good, profitable business for seven years and then in the month of June, 1816, was again burnt. At this time the forge was owned by several different persons. It was again rebuilt by its owners very soon after its destruction the second time and continued to do a very large business for seven years more when again in the month of June, 1823, it was for the third time entirely consumed by fire. But not discouraged the owners again rebuilt the forge, and as before, continued to do a good, profitable business for about seven years, when on the 26th day of July, 1830, it was carried off by the great and memorable flood, leaving scarcely a vestige of the same, or of the dam across the river to mark the place where it once stood . . . The forge has not been rebuilt since the great freshet . . ."

Another gristmill, built of stone in 1818, in the east part of the village, was one of the four buildings which formed the foundation of the original Drake, Smith & Company factory. The upper part of the stone mill was used as a pill box factory. Between 100 and 200 cords of white birch were used annually in manufacturing these boxes, and several people were employed here. A sawmill built sometime before 1836 formed the easterly boundary of the gristmill and shortly after that, a tan-bark mill was built close by. About 1845 the fourth building, a carding mill, was added to this group by Israel Eddy who later passed it on to his son-in-law, Sam Hasseltine, who abandoned the mill about 1880, and the machinery was then moved to Hinesburg. In the meantime, Solomon Drake, owner of both the gristmill and the tan-bark mill, sold the former but retained control of the tannery which he left to his son-in-law, Horace Farr. As late as 1865 leather was tanned in the mill, and a cobbler and harness shop was operated in the Farr house on East Street, now occupied by Charles Stanton. In 1880 the carding mill building was sold to A. J. Eastman who manufactured butter tubs there for five years. He then sold to E. W. Smith and T. S. Drake, who formed the original partnership of Drake & Smith for the manufacture of beekeepers' supplies and boxes. They also bought the business which A. E. Manum had established for the manufacture of beekeepers' supplies. In the early '80's Drake & Smith acquired the rights of the gristmill, sawmill, and tan-bark mill, thus consolidating the four factories in one plant. About 1894 Charles McGee purchased several shares in the business and in 1935, in company with his son-in-law, Richard Smith, and grandson, Clement Smith, he bought the remaining shares from the heirs of E. W. Smith. The property for the first time came under the control of one family. After the death of Richard Smith and Mr. McGee, the plant was operated by Mrs. Richard Smith. A thriving business was done in the manufacture of wooden boxes, silos, water tubs, door frames and sashes to order. The mill was closed down in June 1946, but reopened in February, 1947, with John Cragen, Sr., as owner. In June 1951 the mill was sold to L. Stearns Gay, Jr. of Ludlow, Vermont. In December, 1952, manufacturing was discontinued at this location, and eventually, in 1953, the plant on the New



Haven River was dismantled.

In 1862 Howden, Daniels & Company incorporated and began the manufacture of doors, sashes and blinds in a factory at the foot of Mill Hill. In 1867 David Bosworth bought Daniels' interest and the firm became known as Howden, Bosworth & Company. Competition in the manufacture of doors and blinds was too keen for the company to be very successful, and a change was made after the flood of 1869 had caused some damage to the plant. At this time it was decided to manufacture caskets, the first made by this firm being put on the market in 1870. In 1877 the name was changed to the Bristol Manufacturing Company, known for a number of years as one of the largest casket manufacturing concerns in the country. The firm was very active for a period of some forty years, at times employing 150 men and women, and using over a million feet of lumber a year. Soon after 1910 the business began to decline, and in 1936 it went into the hands of receivers. Under new management it was reopened, but closed in 1939. The following year the plant was purchased by Perley Eaton, who did some business there until the fire of 1947 which destroyed nearly all of the buildings. A few years later the remaining buildings were leveled by fire.

For a number of years, while the Bristol Manufacturing Company was manufacturing caskets, a separate industry known as the O. K. Clothes Dryer Company was housed in the factory belonging to the Bristol Manufacturing Company, and manufactured clothes dryers of maple wood. The manufacture of clothes dryers was discontinued several years before the casket factory was closed.

Close to this plant, but independent of it, was the James Whitney Chair Company, founded about 1850. Whitney finally gave up the manufacture of chairs and in company with M. P. Varney began making caskets. This enterprise was not very successful and the plant was sold to the Bristol Manufacturing Company which tore down one of the two Whitney buildings and erected a paint shop on the site.

Another manufacturing concern in Bristol which was very successful for a time, and one of the largest of its kind in the country, was the Bartlett Plow Manufactory. Much of the sod on the western prairies was broken by the plows manufactured at the Bartlett plant in Bristol. In 1847 a small plant burned, in which plows were made near Quaker Street in the town of Lincoln. The plows were made by David Tabor, Russell Tabor, and Stephen Bartlett. A new manufacturing site utilizing water power was sought, and finally located at the junction of the New Haven River and Baldwin's Creek. After this land was purchased the new site was named Rocky Dale. Five dwelling houses were built, and while a water mill and larger separate foundry were being constructed, a temporary foundry and shop for continuing the plow business were built and operated by steam. The Tabors sold to S. Bartlett & Co., who built a larger water mill containing a sawmill, with flutter wheels to operate the sawmill, and a large Brest Water Wheel to run the plow machinery. Castings for the large water wheel and sawmill parts were made in the first foundry, as well as parts for the manufacture of road scrapers, cultivators, plows, hay cutters, drags, and harrows. Some years after the larger water mill was constructed, means for utilizing water power were much improved and later makes of water wheels were used. Clapboards, spruce lumber, and nail keg staves were added to the line. After spruce lumber began to become scarce, the manufacture of pill boxes and small turned wood parts from white birch was added.

About 1880 fire destroyed the factory of the Bartlett Plow Works but the machinery and the right to manufacture plows had been previously sold to the Patrick family in Hinesburg.

Near the plow factory was Rockwood Barrett's chair stock and butter tub factory which employed 12 men and used 500,000 ft. of lumber annually. Mr. Barrett was a Rutland man and eventually moved the firm to Rutland.

A sawmill in South Bristol, owned by a Mr. Varney, changed hands in the late 1870's and the new firm of Sumner & Prime began the manufacture of beekeepers' supplies. Later C. E. Gove bought into the firm which became known as Prime & Gove. The mill burned in 1894 and was not rebuilt.

In the last half of the century several industries developed which had a short existence and in many cases the dates of the starting and closing of the firms cannot be obtained. There was a mill for tar coating of shingles which was situated beside the O'Brien Brook in South Bristol, and the wagon shops of Albert Dunshee & Son (Herbert), Arba Mansfield, and J. H. Wright. Three other wagon makers who also added blacksmithing to their trade were F. Greenough, Octave Cushman, and N. McIntyre. Harnesses were made by Ira Farnham and William Battles and later by Ira Eastman, Heman Hill, and J. Z. Gaudet. Peter Lander operated a cigar-making factory for a time, employing about 20 hands.

The flood of 1869 destroyed the old red gristmill, at the foot of Mill Hill, but the owner, R. D. Stewart, rebuilt it. Later the Bristol Manufacturing Company took it over as part of their plant and Mr. Stewart opened a feed store in the Gale store which had been moved to South Street. In 1896 Arthur Kilbourn and E. W. Smith formed a partnership and started the Cyclone Gristmill for custom grinding and a feed store. In 1900 Mr. Kilbourn bought his partner's interest and became sole owner. The 1924 fire destroyed the Kilbourn mill but it was soon rebuilt and a separate office building was added. In addition to this mill there is now a branch store at New Haven Junction which serves as a warehouse and feed store. Since Mr. Kilbourn's death in 1944 the business has been operated by his sons John and Francis. Farm machinery, cement and fertilizer are now sold as well as grain.

In 1897 the Cold Spring Creamery on the New Haven River, owned by Evarts and Eastman, was doing a thriving business and had just installed new machinery at its branch creamery in New Haven Mills. At this time the Riverside Condensed Milk Company was formed and built a factory across the river from the creamery at a cost of several thousand dollars. Evarts and Eastman were both members of the Riverside Company which took over control of the creamery. At first the firm prospered taking in from 30,000 to 40,000 pounds of milk daily, but trouble soon arose. The condensery was closed and the machinery was sent to Worcester in 1901. Mike Hannon bought both the creamery and condensery buildings at auction. In 1903 he leased the creamery to a Boston firm and there is no further record of its activities. Except for two winters when it was used for roller skating, the condensery building remained idle until 1910 when Mr. Hannon sold it to Homer Hewitt and Fred Wright who established a wood turning factory employing from 8 to 10 persons and doing a yearly business of \$5,000 to \$8,000. The factory burned in 1914 and was not rebuilt.

The same year the condensery was built, 1897, A. L. Cain leased a section of land at the corner of Pine and Maple Streets and began the



construction of a factory for the making of wood novelties which was finished the next year. The factory, which was a successful enterprise, employed from 10 to 20 hands. After the factory burned in 1903 Mr. Cain was too disheartened to rebuild, but local men formed a stock company, known as the Bristol Novelty Company, and rebuilt the plant. After a time the business ceased and the factory was left vacant.

In 1912 the factory of the New Haven Mills Manufacturing Company at New Haven Mills, owned by M. I. Thomas, burned. A special village meeting was immediately called in Bristol, at which it was proposed that the village buy the Novelty Company factory and present it to Mr. Thomas, with tax exemption for five years, provided that he would locate in Bristol. The village officers, however, found that they had no authority to buy property. Mr. Thomas offered to pay \$2,500 for the building. This offer was accepted and the remaining \$1,500 of the purchase price was provided by the townspeople, who were very anxious to have the plant located here. This was the beginning of the Vermont Box Company which was operated by Ford Thomas, son of M. I. Thomas, until his retirement in 1952. In September, 1952, Mr. Thomas' majority stock interest in the corporation was sold to L. Stearns Gay, Jr., the other portion being retained by Reginald B. Sentenne. Stockholders, who were also officers and directors of the new corporation were: Reginald B. Sentenne, president; L. Stearns Gay, Jr., treasurer; Richard P. Mullin, vice president; Barbara S. Gay, clerk; Leon S. Gay and George E. Squier, directors.

Shortly after this change of ownership, the manufacture of furniture was begun on a small scale. By 1954 the pine furniture of this company was being shipped into all of New England, while at the same time the wooden box business was showing some decline. To more properly identify the firm as a furniture manufacturing concern, the corporation changed its name in September 1956 to Drake, Smith & Company, Inc., (Mr. Gay having retained right to this trade name from the former business). The company discontinued manufacture of boxes and concentrated on pine furniture and wooden counter display units.

The Vermont Box Company, now known as Drake, Smith & Company, Inc., at present manufactures a complete line of pine furniture as well as counter display units, at its plant at Maple and Pine Streets. Various alterations have been made since the change of ownership, including a rather extensive addition to manufacturing space and a furniture showroom, which now extends the plant space from Maple to Munsill Avenue. An average of 75 employees have year-round employment, and the 1957 payroll was approximately \$250,000. The furniture is sold to more than 500 dealers in 35 states and consists of a complete line of bedroom, living room and dining room furniture. Showrooms are maintained in New York City; Grand Rapids, Michigan; and Los Angeles, California.

Charles Frary started a factory on the New Haven River, east of Bristol village in 1908 and conducted a successful wood turning business there until 1934 when he sold it to Frank Elliot. The factory is now demolished.

In 1917 Stafford & Sons of Morrisville took over a last block factory in Bristol which they later sold in 1932 to the Chamber of Commerce, with all the machinery and the tenement house. In 1934 the factory was sold to Carl Aldrich who operated a monument carving business for a short duration at this site.

In 1936 the A. Johnson Lumber Company purchased the Fred Ham-

mond farm on Bristol Flats, where at a large outlay a number of buildings were constructed. In 1938 the plant was moved to Bristol from South Lincoln where it had been operating for over 10 years. The company had just gotten established in Bristol when the flood occurred in the fall of 1938, causing much damage and large quantities of logs and building materials were carried downstream by the New Haven River. Much of these materials were later recovered. The firm, under the management of Fred Johnson and his son, Andrew, now operates on a large scale, buying logs in the vicinity and supplying all kinds of building materials as well as doing custom sawing.

The Frank E. Lee Company, manufacturing small turned wooden goods, was started in 1938 in a small building adjoining the home of Mr. Lee. It was then known as Peterson & Lee. The following year, as business expanded, more room was needed so they moved into the barn which was a larger building. In the Fall of 1940 this building was completely destroyed by fire. The following Spring Mr. Lee rebuilt his factory at its present location about one mile east of the village.

The Bristol branch of the Van Raalte Company was started in 1948 in the Tomasi Block. In 1952 Van Raalte purchased the two buildings owned by the Tomasi family and expanded their production. The local plant is one of the three Vermont plants which are part of the Saratoga, New York, unit; the other two being in Middlebury and Randolph. The Bristol branch is a sewing plant, manufacturing nylon underwear from fabric knitted and cut at other Van Raalte mills. At the present time the Bristol plant employs approximately 150 people from the town of Bristol and its environs.

The Claire Lathrop Lumber business moved from Waltham to its present location on River Street in Bristol in 1947. Eastern soft and hard woods are manufactured in rough and finished lumber, and twelve men are employed.

Kennedy Brothers located in Bristol in 1943, moving into a former garage building on Mountain Street. They are manufacturers and distributors of giftwares, specializing in woodenware and items of wood combined with other materials, chiefly pottery, glass, and metal. With a branch store in Charlotte, they employ between 17 and 25 people.

Carlie Smith has operated a woodworking shop since 1950 in the old last block factory on Pine Street. He employs three men in the manufacture of parts for toys, makes handles and moldings, and does other miscellaneous woodwork.

Gus Kusch and wife located in Bristol in 1947. At their home they are turning out a variety of toys, novelties and an assortment of gifts such as book-ends, magazine racks, corner cupboards and Christmas Decorations. They have an attractive display stand in front of their home.

**History of The Little Notch** — The section known as the "Little Notch" is supposed to have derived its name from the fact that it is the smaller of two notches or clefts in the mountain range which extends through the entire length of the town of Bristol in a north and south direction. The Little Notch supplies the outlet for the watershed of the entire southeastern corner of the town, and covers approximately three thousand acres.

Five small streams from different directions join together forming what is known as the Notch Brook. This is the same brook which is called "O'Brien Brook" in the early records of Bristol, after the three O'-



Brien brothers who operated a mill on the stream. A body of water known as Gilmore Pond is situated about one and a quarter miles easterly from the main highway leading through the Little Notch. This pond formed by springs covers some ten acres, with a depth of three feet and a black muddy bottom. The outlet of this pond is one of the five streams that form the Notch Brook. The name is supposed to have been derived from a man by the name of Gilmore who at an early period had a mill about fifty rods down stream from the outlet. Decayed timber of the old flume and log dam can still be seen.

The first road leading to the "Notch" left the main highway near the school house in South Bristol turning to the east and following up the westerly side of the Notch Brook. In the year 1859 the present highway leading up the easterly side of the Notch Brook was opened for use affording not only a better grade but also a connection with the road leading south from Bristol Village along the foot of the mountain, this section having being settled for some time. Late in the year of 1860 the road was completed over the mountain to the southern part of the town of Lincoln. At the point where the road crosses the divide into Lincoln the altitude is 1,899 feet above sea level.

The date of the first settlement in the "Little Notch" is unknown but it would seem that lumbering was the occupation that attracted people to this locality. Records show that on November 11, 1831, Rufus Barnard sold to Curtis ten acres off the south end of lot No. 6 for a mill site. This site was at the point where the five brooks unite and for one hundred years following a mill was in operation there. But nothing in the lumber industry of importance was established until the late 60's when Eastman and Durfee built a sawmill for the manufacture of lumber, clapboards and butter tubs which were in great demand at that time. The mill was soon destroyed by fire, thus ending the first real attempt of a lumber industry in the "Little Notch."

In 1879 Joseph Jimmo built a lumber mill below the Eastman site which he operated for a few years. In the summer of 1880 Noah Lathrop and H. L. Parmelee purchased Mr. Eastman's mill site, together with two houses, a blacksmith shop and a barn. They then erected another mill on this site. In 1885 Mr. Lathrop bought Mr. Parmelee's interest in the firm. In 1903 the mill burned and was immediately rebuilt. That year Clarence Lathrop entered the firm which was known thereafter as N. Lathrop and Son. It grew to be the largest lumber concern in Addison County turning out dressed lumber, shingles and clapboards. The business continued until 1925 when all the timber of commercial value had been cut in this section.

Among the early settlers living in log houses in the decades 1850-80 were families of the following names; Harris, Peckham, Cormier, Cousino, Scarbough, Carpenter, Eubar, Odette, Jimmo, Parmelee, Booska, Pecott, Sears, Swinyer, Vincent, Rivers.

At first small clearings were established and log houses erected to be followed by frame houses. Farming on a small scale was attempted but the land was so uneven and the soil so rocky that it never proved successful. Many of the settlers turned to lumbering, selling their logs to the mill owners, while others converted their hardwood into charcoal which they sold to the owners, of forges in Bristol. There was a very good market for charcoal around 1850.

In 1879 school district Number 9 was organized and a school building was erected. The school had an attendance of 14 pupils. As the



**Federated Church**



**Lawrence Memorial Library**



lumber industry increased the population became larger and in the school year 1887-88 there was an attendance at the school of 50 pupils, all in charge of one teacher. About 1900 a two room school was built and for approximately ten years two teachers were employed. In the spring of 1938 the school was discontinued as there were not enough pupils to maintain it longer.

After N. Lathrop and Son discontinued their lumber business in 1925 the population decreased rapidly. Many of the homesteads have been sold for camps as it has become a very good deer and bear hunting haunt. The school house was moved by Roy Jimmo onto Bristol Flats for a home. The old Borzone place has been sold to city residents for a summer camp. An excavation was made in the early 1900's which is filled from the source of a spring from the east base of Elephant Mountain. This land was sold to the Middlebury Water Works with a considerable amount of acreage by Noah Lathrop.

Many new camps have been built. A beautiful stream of water runs parallel with the road through the cool shade of the trees. Many speckled trout linger in the stream much to the delight of fishermen. Many people seek the coolness and quiet of Bristol Notch unmarred by even a picnic table.

## Churches

**Advent Church** — The Advent Christian Society was formed in 1840 and held regular services in the Academy Hall until they leased their present building from the Congregationalists. Sometime prior to 1891, this building and the land on which it stood had been purchased from the Congregational Society by William Howden and Mrs. Susan Hall, members of the Advent Church. In 1891, these two people deeded the property to the Advent Christian Society for as long as they continued to hold meetings there in support of the Gospel. When meetings should cease to be held there, the property would revert to the heirs of the donors.

Meetings were held during the summer for a few years, but these were finally given up and the Church was returned to the donors' descendants (about 1947). They in turn deeded the Church to the Town of Bristol, the same to be used for school and educational purposes.

**The First Baptist Church** — Unlike most of the towns in the country which considered the support of the Gospel and the building of a meeting house as town business to be taken up in town meetings, Bristol kept church and town matters separate. The first religious society in the town was the Baptist Church, organized in 1794 by Elden Joseph Call with nine members. The first Baptist minister was the Reverend Thomas Tuttle, who remained only a short time. The first settled minister in town who received the use of the minister lot was a pastor of this church, the Reverend Amos Stearns, who was ordained at the home of Robert Holley in Bristol, September 2, 1818.

For the first few years, services were held in private dwellings, barns, and school houses. In 1819, the Baptists, the Congregationalists, and the Universalists joined forces and built a meeting house which was to be shared according to their contributions of labor and money. About 1837, the Baptists came into full possession of the building, which still serves them as their church. The first extensive remodeling was done in 1885, when an addition was built on the north end of the church to ac-

commodate the church's pipe organ, which served until 1938 when it was rebuilt.

While Reverend Wesley A. Kinsie was pastor (1894-1903) the present parsonage was built. Soon after this, a bell was placed in the belfry, the gift of Egra B. Eddy. It was rung the first time in 1904. During the years that followed, the church flourished, and the church membership was increased by one hundred new members.

In 1925, the church building was extensively remodeled and completely redecorated at a cost of nearly \$10,000 under the able chairmanship of Mrs. Frederick R. Dickerman. The pastor was Reverend J. Fowler. One of the changes was a new entrance which made possible a center aisle in the main auditorium. New memorial windows were added, as well as new pews, hardwood floors, and modern lighting. The new pews had originally belonged to the Baptist Church in Vergennes. At this time, the spire was restored to its original form.

In 1953, the church raised a fund to redecorate and modernize the kitchen. At about the same time, a new electric organ was bought with money from the Grace A. Hanks Memorial Fund. The present organist is Mr. John Sumner Sherwin.

One of the features of the work of the church has been the School of Missions. Organized in 1929, this school has been held annually for six weeks each year (since then). Soon after this, the Daily Vacation Bible School was started and is now held for two weeks each summer.

In the regular Gospel work of the Ministry, in its evangelistic and missionary efforts, and in the training of its young people to exercise Christian influence wherever each one may go, the church receives support from its various organizations. The largest of these is the Treasure Seekers Society which includes all the women of the Baptist membership and congregation. This society, which was organized in 1886, now in its 73rd year, still carries on work for worldwide charity and missions. Since 1942, it has sponsored a flower show in Bristol, which, though comparatively small and unprofessional, has been highly successful. Other organized groups are a thriving Sunday School and outside study classes, young adult and youth groups. One of these is the Pocock Club, formed in April, 1957, as an adult group for Christian fellowship. The present pastor is the Reverend Ronald Carver.

**The Federated Church** — The Congregational Church was organized in July, 1805, by the Reverend J. Bushnell of Cornwall, who occasionally preached there after that. No definite place of worship was established until 1819 when the Congregationalists, the Universalists and the Baptists built their Union Church. In 1837 the Congregationalists sold their share in the building and built a meeting house for themselves. This church they later leased to the Advent Christian Society. Their first settled minister was the Reverend Calvin Butler, who was ordained in 1842. In 1890 the Congregationalist Society had nearly died out, but it became active again in 1899 under the fine leadership of Reverend C. N. Thomas, and a new church was built on North Street. They federated with the Methodists in 1917.

The Methodist Church was organized in 1813 when services were held at the home of Ebenezer Saxton. The first sermon was preached by the Reverend Scovenberger. No meeting place was erected by them until 1819 when a chapel was built which served until the present building at the corner of North and Church Streets was erected in 1840. Dur-



ing Mr. Skaftes' pastorship (1904-1905) this church was extensively redecorated and completely modernized. It was again redecorated in the spring of 1939. After the two churches were federated in May, 1917, it has been known as the Federated Church. Since the Methodists far outnumbered the Congregationalists, a Methodist pastor has always been in charge. Services were held in the Methodist Church except during the summer months when services were held in the Congregational Church until the church was sold to the Masons for a Masonic Temple.

During the past ten years, many memorial funds have been given to the church to beautify the edifice and to buy equipment for the church building and the parsonage. Among the people so remembered are Mrs. Irene Wheelock, Mrs. Grace Hanks, Mrs. Shiverette, Dr. R. J. Bristol, Mr. Elmer Boynton, Miss Olla Boynton, Anna and Edward Geary, and Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Guindon.

All departments of the church — the Ladies' Aid Society, the Youth and Adult Fellowship, and the Sunday School — are very active under the leadership of the pastor, the Reverend Jonathan Bursey, who came to Bristol in May, 1955.

Mr. Bursey has been honored by his appointment by Governor Johnson as Protestant chaplain at the Weeks School in Vergennes.

**Catholic Church** — The Catholic Church, St. Ambrose, was built in 1877 under the direction of Reverend Patrick Cunningham, pastor of the Middlebury Catholic Church. It is located just beyond the Bristol High School building and faces the common from the west. The first Mass was celebrated here January 1, 1878. The first resident priest, Reverend Michael Carmody was appointed in 1893. He had the parochial residence adjoining the Church built between 1893 and 1896. At the present time Reverend Christopher McHugh is in charge and the Congregation numbers about 700 members.

There are four parish organizations; The Catholic Women's Club organized in 1935 and consisting of 80 members; St. Ambrose Ladies Sodality, organized in 1938, consisting of 80 members; the Holy Name Society, organized the same year, consists of 95 men and boys and the Catholic Youth Organization consisting of High School students.

The recent major improvements have been the rearrangement of the pews making possible a center aisle, a new exit door on the north side of the church and enlargement of the basement, making a large hall which is used for all parish activities.

**Cemeteries of Bristol** — The earliest cemetery in town was located on Bristol Flats on the farm now owned by Alec Hammond. No trace of this now remains. The next cemetery in point of age is probably Greenwood Cemetery situated at the foot of Stony Hill to the West of the village. Three stones in this cemetery bear testimony of early burial, one of a child, Amanda Soper in 1802, the second a twin stone marking the graves of two daughters of George and Anna Sumner, one of whom died in 1804, the other in 1808. The third stone was placed in memory of a Dafoote child who died in 1808.

Three other cemeteries which have been in existence for a long time and are still maintained are the Varney, Meehan and Briggs Hill Cemeteries.

Land for the Catholic Cemetery, located north of Bristol Village was purchased in 1807 by Father Boyle and was blessed by the very Reverend Thomas Lynch in 1898.



Catholic Church, Bristol Academy, School Building, Baptist Church



Catholic Church & Rectory, Public School Building



## Epitaphs — Found in the Varney Cemetery :

Here lies entombed Henry McLaughlin, Esq.—Age 54.

He was among the first settlers of this town in which he was a useful and honorable inhabitant for nearly twenty years. When he removed with his family to Hopkinton, N. Y. and while from thence, on a visit with his wife to their friends, was taken sick and died at Middlebury, Vermont on the seventh day of February, 1813. Seven days after, his wife died also. It may truly be said that love in early youth united their hearts, and that during their lives which were full of painful afflictions, friendship and affection entwined with Christian graces so strongly cemented the indissoluble bands, that in the manhood of age inexorable death could not dissolve or sever them. Peace to their ashes, the index of their well spent lives, points to heaven.

Betsey Haskill, died May 2nd 1810—Age 23 years.

"Youth don't forget as you pass by, you'll turn to dust as well as I."

In memory of Deodama, daughter of Col. Ezekiel Dunton and Comfort his wife who died April 28, 1810. Age 16 years.

With all the charms that sense and worth impart.  
She gained esteem and cheered the parents hearts.  
But death's cold hand our brightest hope destroys  
And blasts the opening bud of future joys.

In memory of Isaac Ball who died Aug. 17, 1809.

Depart my friends, dry up your tears  
Here I must lie till Christ appears.

In memory of Ruth Sumner who died Feb. 1, 1809, Age 27 years.

Farewell bright soul, a fond farewell,  
Till we shall meet again above  
In the sweet groves, where pleasures dwell,  
And trees of life bear fruits of love.

## Bristol School

**Bristol Schools 1789-1959** — The first school in the town of Bristol was a simple building of logs erected by voluntary contributions of labor in March, 1789, and located on Bristol Flats. The first action in town meeting in regard to schools was in March, 1793, when the eastern part of the town through the Notch was set off as one entire school district. This was subdivided two years later, in town meeting, and at the meeting in 1803 two northeastern districts were reunited. The first official report of the schools was made in the census of 1810 and was attested by the town clerk, James Day. At this time all children between the ages of four and eighteen were classed as scholars if they attended school at any time during the year. There was a total of 481 scholars in the ten districts which were named as follows; Center, North, Northeast, "Leg," United, Southeast, Hill, South, North Hill, and Village. The district system of schools continued until March, 1893, when the nine districts then existing were brought under control of one committee and the town system was adopted.

In 1837, a two-story building was erected in the village with the intention of establishing secondary education in the upper story. This effort was unsuccessful. In 1855 the selectmen were authorized to raise

\$600 to aid construction of the "Bristol Literary and Scientific Institute." This two-story building was completed in 1856 and constitutes the basis of the present High School. Horace Thomas was the first teacher in the new building. The school was moved to its present location on the park, from the corner of Maple and Pleasant Sts. about 1876.

About this time also, Bristol's first village school was moved from its location (the present site of the Catholic Rectory) to Garfield St. and became a private residence.

By 1898, as the school on the Park was serving as both graded and high school, lack of space necessitated an addition intended to house the high school departments. Tuition was free to all pupils whose parents or guardians resided in Bristol. A furnace and running water were installed in the graded school also.

A Union School District was formed in 1907, consisting of Bristol, Lincoln, Starksboro, Monkton and New Haven, and a superintendent of schools was employed. A. W. Eddy of New Haven served as the first superintendent. At this time, there were 36 pupils in high school with a total of 262 in the whole school; 125 were in the six rural schools of Bristol.

Bristol High School was rated a first class school and offered college preparatory subjects and also commercial subjects in the fourth year. In 1910 agriculture was added as an elective course.

In 1912, a two-story addition was built on the north side and steam heat was installed. The next year, John L. Selden came from Massachusetts, to teach agriculture. He later served as principal, supervising principal and superintendent of the district. Domestic science and teacher training courses were added to the curriculum. The latter course was designed to provide teachers for rural schools. Athletics and music formed part of the school program.

About 1919, Bristol became a Junior-Senior High school with 6 elementary grades; the 7th and 8th grades constituting the junior high school and taught in part by high school teachers. The remaining four grades made up the high school proper.

Only four rural schools remained open by 1929 and transportation became an important item in school costs.

In 1930, \$30,000 was voted to erect a supplementary building to provide additional classrooms, also a gymnasium and auditorium. This addition, located to the north, was of modern fireproof construction and connected to the old school by a passageway.

By 1941, the school population had increased to 210 in the elementary school, 50 in the junior high and 156 in the senior high with only 29 in rural schools. A shop course in electrical work and in auto mechanics had been introduced, but due to the war and scarcity of teachers, these projects had to be dropped. However, the Johnson Lumber Co. made a farm machinery course available under the National Defense Training Program.

In 1948, the school board reported over-crowded conditions and the need for more rooms and better facilities; normal improvements having been disrupted by the war, ensuing scarcities and high construction costs. One elementary grade was being taught in the basement of Holley Hall. The former Advent Church building was donated by the Howden heirs for school purposes. An industrial arts shop was set up in the lower part of this building.



The South Bristol school, the last rural school, was closed in 1950 and the total enrollment in Bristol was 408. The upper part of Howden Hall was converted to two classrooms and an office for the superintendent. John Selden resigned after thirty-seven years of devoted service to the schools of the district. He was succeeded by Milton G. Moore. A driver training course was added; music which had been missing, reappeared in the curriculum; a physical education teacher was also on the teacher rostrum. The cost of education to the town had passed the \$50,000 mark.

In 1952, it was voted to build a five-room building on Mountain St. on the so-called Kilbourne property. This new building was intended to house four elementary grades and provide a multi-purpose room. In 1953, the number of school directors was increased from three to five. In September of that year, the Mountain St. school was ready for use, but the multi-purpose room had to be converted immediately to a class room. The rising birth rate due to war marriages forecast the pressing need for still more class room space for the lower grades.

A citizen's study group, appointed by the selectmen, in 1955 recommended the building of an addition to the Mountain St. school, to consist of seven classrooms and a multi-purpose room. This arrangement would care for twelve elementary classes and provide facilities for the hot lunch program, which had been in effect since about 1947, under the capable direction of Mrs. Warner Shadrick. It was not until 1957, however, after five special town meetings, that the addition was open for occupancy.

The estimated cost of the Bristol school system had now reached approximately \$140,000 with about one-third of this amount defrayed by State Aid payments. Thirty-one teachers including the principal were employed. About half of the high school staff held a master's degree or the equivalent. College preparatory subjects offered included three years of Latin, French and German; elementary, intermediate and advanced algebra, plane geometry and trigonometry; the laboratory sciences, chemistry, physics and biology. The commercial course covered four years with typing, shorthand and bookkeeping inserted in the last two years. Home economics and shop work were available and the music department afforded band instruction and chorus singing. Physical education brought sports and health instruction to everyone. These subjects were in addition, of course, to the basic subjects of English and History, with an elective course in Speech.

The school system, which had unavoidably lapsed from its high status prior to World War 2, due to a scarcity of teachers, materials, low salaries and frequent changes in personnel, has been quietly and ably revitalized and expanded under the administration of Superintendent Coddington and Principal Breen. The majority of teachers now own their own homes in the village and there is a minimum of changes in the teaching staff each year.

It is also worthy of note that a program of immunizations and physical examinations from infancy thru the senior high school year has been set up through the school system for the protection of Bristol school children. Mrs. George Purinton, assisted by the state department public health nurses and local doctors was responsible for this development.

The following men have served as Principal: Charles S. Paige, 1892-1902; W. H. Botsford, 1902-1906; C. M. Hazen, 1906-1907; F.H. Wallace,

1907-1909; B. E. Hicks, 1909-1910; G. G. Newell, 1910-1913; J. O. Baxendale, 1913-1915; R. W. Hedges, 1915-1917; J. L. Selden, 1917-1935; (1928-1935 as supervising principal); L. R. Rowe, 1935-1939; J. L. Gunn, 1939-1943; R. E. Howes, 1943-1946; Clinton DeMeritt, 1946-1947; Thos. Sullivan, 1947-1950; Stuart Marshall, 1950-1952; Richard Breen, 1952-.

**German School** — The Middlebury College School of German was conducted in Bristol for six weeks during July and August, the classes being held in the Bristol High School. The German School was established in Middlebury in 1915, the first of the Middlebury College language schools, but was discontinued in 1918 due to World War 1. When it was re-opened in 1931 it was set up in Bristol according to the two leading principles of the Middlebury Idea — isolation from other educational projects and concentration on one subject. The students were pledged to speak nothing but German to each other during the six weeks course. They were housed in private homes but boarded at the Bristol Inn Annex, where all their social activities were held. Dr. Ernst Feiser, professor of German at John Hopkins University, headed the school after its re-organization in 1931. A class for beginners, a practical demonstration in teaching high school German, was available to students of Bristol.

In 1950, the German School returned to Middlebury, the College having been able to build dormitories to accommodate the summer students.

**Lawrence Memorial Library** — The Bristol Library was established on January 20th, 1893, when a group of public spirited citizens met and formed the Bristol Library Association. The library was opened in one room over the Patterson Store in August, 1893. It was financed by membership fees of \$2.00, yearly tickets of \$1.00, private contributions and public entertainments. A rental collection which aided in financing the projects was also kept.

The first action taken in town meeting in regards to a library occurred in March, 1901, when \$50.00 was appropriated to help establish a public library. The appropriations were increased to \$200.00 in 1902 and 1903. In March, 1902, the Bristol Library Association turned over its property, which included 1,095 books and a large collection of magazines to the town. The Bristol Public Library was established.

At the annual town meeting in 1910, the townspeople voted to accept the offer of W. A. Lawrence to erect a library building and present it to the town. The town voted \$800.00 for the library that same year. The building was completed and dedicated January 17, 1911. It was given in memory of Mrs. Lockie Partch Lawrence, first wife of Mr. Lawrence, and of his second wife, Mrs. Minnie Peet Lawrence, both of whom had been faithful workers in the library association. Mr. Lawrence left to the town a small real estate development, consisting of four tenement houses, known as Lawrence Lane, and a two tenement house beside the library to help finance the library, which has been known since 1911 as the Lawrence Memorial Library.

The town appropriates each year a sum of money to help maintain the library. At the present time it is \$2,000.00.

The library has grown considerably in number of books, periodicals, and people using it. The schools use the library very extensively, and the young people enjoy its many helpful privileges. The present librarian is Mrs Sylvia Kirby.

In 1941, Bristol, Vermont, was the first of the seventeen Bristols in the United States to contribute aid to the people of the maternal city





N. H. Munsill Hose Co.



Masonic Temple

of Bristol, England, which had been severely bombed. A sum of \$700.00 was collected and sent. The Lord Mayor of Bristol, England, responded most kindly to this aid, by making a radio broadcast thanking us. Because of his interest in us a scrap book history of all the informative data of the town was written by Merrit Allen, and photographs by George Lathrop were sent to the mother city. Since the war years, we have had letters, books and photos of Bristol, England. Many of these are in the library. We also have a beautiful painting, a little French doll dressed as the Northern French people are and a very pretty plate. All of these are gifts to us in Bristol, Vermont, for our help to France during the war years. They came on the Freedom Train.

It was after the work of getting the scrap book history that the Outlook Club decided to publish a bound edition of Bristol history from the years 1762 to 1940.

## Utilities

**Electric Lights** — The 1890's proved a successful decade for Bristol. The first train ran from Bristol to New Haven Junction in January, 1892, and on the evening of December 23, that same year, the switch was thrown providing the stores and hotels of Bristol with their first electric lights. Four days later a 1,200 candle power arc light was installed between the Bristol House and Holley Hall.

The first electric plant was located about 30 feet above the second Rocky Dale bridge and had a fall of only 25 feet. The station was equipped with the latest model apparatus by the General Electric Company of Boston and was considered one of the best plants in the state at the time. The dam was built by E. B. Palmer and the penstock constructed by E. M. Smith who also installed the wheels. The plant was owned by Mr. Barrett of Rutland and T. S. Drake of Bristol and operated for nearly five years by George Randall. The life of the plant was short for it burned in 1897.

A new plant was built adjacent to the highway near the upper covered bridge and was taken in May, 1897, by W. N. Hughes who operated it until 1912. Mr. Hughes not only built the second plant but also the present one, now in use, and superintended building the tube. The present plant has a fall of 100 feet. In 1905 the Hortonia Power Company of Lake Dunmore bought the Plant from Barrett and Drake and later Edward Blackwell became manager. The Bristol line became connected with the Hortonia lines and remained thus until the plant was sold to the Central Vermont Public Service Corporation, with headquarters in Rutland, in 1926.

Improvements in the present plant have been made several times and it is now run semi-automatically. During the hurricane of September, 1938, the dam was almost entirely washed away. In order to repair the damage, land was purchased by the Central Vermont Corp. and the main works changed from the south to the north side of the river.

There has been one fatality connected with the existence of the electric plant, the death of Mr. Tart in 1901. He was cleaning ice from one of the racks in the dam when he was swept into the high water. His body was discovered a few days later down the river.

**Electric Service Progress** — The past decade in Bristol has shown remarkable progress in the use of electricity for this area, according to Central Vermont Public Service Corporation who has supplied power to



this section since 1929. Besides its distribution lines, the utility operates a company merchandise store, a hydro generation station and two substations here.

Twenty-two miles of power line extensions have been built since 1945 in order to furnish electricity to the Lincoln neighborhood, making a total of thirty-seven miles constituting this service. Line extensions have also been added in the Bristol area during this time.

In 1949 the Bristol village substation's capacity was stepped up from 400 KVA to 1,000 KVA and the ground surface was tarred making a more attractive appearance for the substation. The substation's increased capacity was made because of the addition in power load and to insure continuity of service to the area's customers. Another plant improvement was the voltage step-up to 4,200 volts from 2,300 volts on Bristol village's distribution lines. This took place within the past few years.

Thirteen new street lights in the business section of Bristol village were installed in 1954. These lights are modern mercury vapor and incandescent types especially designed for safe and attractive street lighting.

It is reported that domestic customers have increased their average kilowatt-hour use of electricity 50 per cent over the past ten years. In the same period farm customers have shown a growth of 80 per cent in average use.

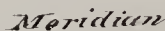
The number of customers using power from CVPS lines has also followed the same growth trend. The number of residential customers has increased 10 per cent, and total customers have developed upward 17 per cent in the ten-year span. Electric sales measured in kilowatt-hours have gone up 79 per cent since 1948.

**Telephone System** — About 1895 the public telephone system was installed in Bristol. According to the records there were two switchboards. One was in the home of Mr. Monroe on Church Street (house now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Jonas Fuller.) This was known as the Addison County Telephone Company with Mr. Allen Calhoun of Middlebury as its president, Mrs. Vernon Pecor (nee Josephine Monroe) being the operator. This system handled only county calls — no long distance. The rental charge was \$1.00 per month for subscribers and they had free service for nearby calls. In November, 1905, this switchboard was moved to Dr. Bisbee's Drug Store, located on the north side of Main Street. At the same time there was an exchange in the South Side Drug Store known as the New England Telephone Company and handled the long distance calls of the town. The switchboard was at Bisbee's Drug Store for about a year, after which that Company consolidated with the New England Telephone Company.

For many years the telephone office was at the South Side Drug Store but was later moved upstairs in the present Post Office block. Mr. F. H. Chessmore of Richmond was the manager and the name of the company was changed to Western Telephone & Telegraph Co., owned independently but connects with the New England Telephone & Telegraph Company.

In 1950, Mr. M. J. Mack of Richmond became manager and on August 13, 1952, the dial system was installed. A dial house was built on Mill Hill and the telephone office and operators were no longer needed. Outside calls are now handled by the New England Telephone & Telegraph Company with central at Middlebury. On January 1, 1959, the

## Scale 201







Western Telephone & Telegraph Company had eight hundred fifty-eight subscribers.

**Water System** — The history of a water supply in Bristol village begins in 1811 when, in the fall, a company was incorporated to supply the residents of the village with water. In the principal aqueduct the water was brought first in hollow logs, then in lead pipes, which proved so unsatisfactory that the logs were used again. In 1841 pipes were made from water, cement, lime and river sand. These pipes proved successful and were probably used until the Munsill system was established. In the smaller aqueducts wood logs were used exclusively.

November 25, 1883, the following residents of Garfield Street met and formed the Garfield Aqueduct Company: C. E. Smith, J. J. Dumas, M. P. Varney, S. D. Farr, E. G. Prime, Clark Huntington, and Frank Greenough. At this meeting it was voted to assess each shareholder \$20.00 to meet the expense of buying the pipe. A meeting was held April 26, 1884, at which the constitution and by-laws of the company were adopted and officers elected. The supply of water was confined to the residents of Garfield Street and to S. D. Farr of North Street and to T. S. Drake on East Street who owned the spring from which the water was taken. Mr. Drake leased this spring to the company January 3, 1885. The company was of short duration, the last recorded meeting being held April 10, 1889.

Bristol village was incorporated in 1903. One major value of incorporation was that the people of the village could now vote for an adequate water system to replace or supplement the Rock Springs system which had been established during the decade 1880-90. This system, better known as the Munsill system because N. H. Munsill was the leading stockholder, took its first supply of water from a spring on Hogsback mountain. Later the Rock Springs company laid a line from a spring back of Bristol Pond to the village and still later supplemented this by obtaining water from the spring in the Basin. At first this water was piped into tubs near the street, one tub serving two families, but after the Basin Spring was added to the supply, water was pumped into the houses. At the time of incorporation this system failed to supply the needs of the whole village and by 1905 plans were underway to bring water from springs at the base of Mt. Abraham in Lincoln to a reservoir on Hogsback and the present gravity system was thus established. Some time after this the Munsill system ceased to operate, but the spring in the basin came into use again in the winter of 1933-34 when parts of the water mains in the village froze and a pump was installed there to pump water into the mains which were not frozen and to prevent a water famine. At a village meeting in 1934 it was voted to buy the pump and equipment and install it permanently to be ready for emergencies.

**Munsill Hose Company** — The Hose Company was started in 1893. The Rock Spring Water Company gave the first equipment which consisted of a hose cart and 700 feet of hose. Mr. Munsill was the chief stockholder in this company, thus the name N. H. Munsill Hose Co. Many of the by-laws drawn up by Mr. Munsill are still followed. The fire station was built in 1898.

The company has rendered faithful service to the village for 66 years. In 1934 it was voted to allow some of the equipment to go outside of the village to aid in fire fighting.

New equipment was purchased in 1937. This gave adequate protection until 1953 when a new fire truck was purchased. This included





Parade on Main Street - 150th Celebration



Float



a 700 gallon tank and pumper, a portable pump with suction lines, two Scott-air pacs and other small equipment. This equipmet proved helpful when Bristol went to the assistance of Middlebury and Vergennes in 1954 and 1958.

In 1953 the company joined the Addison County Unit which includes eight other towns.

One of our first disastrous fires occured in 1898 when over half of the business section on the north side of Main Street was destroyed by fire. Again in 1914 nearly all of the Drake Farr block was left in ruins. In 1924 Bristol suffered one of the worse fires in its history — Kilbourn's grist mill and Stewarts barn were completely destroyed. Other buildings on the south side of Main Street were so badly damaged that they had to be practically rebuilt. These included Quinlan and Wright's grocery, the Rexall Drug Store, the bank, E. W. Varney's funeral parlors and Palmer and Day's store. The records of the G. A. R., the Woman's Relief Corps. and Business Men's Association were destroyed. The tragedy of this fire was that much of it might have been prevented. The fire alarm, which was a bell hung in the fire house, failed to awaken many of the fire-fighting squad. Shortly after this an electrically controlled siren was installed which can be heard for a distance of more than five miles. It is blown at noon each day to check its working order.

The O'Neil block, a very old landmark was destroyed by fire in 1929. It was first used as a hotel with Daniel Willard as the last landlord. Patrick O'Neil remodeled it into a business block about 1850. At the time it burned Dewey Kemp's restaurant and Dan Thomas store were located there. The site is now occupied by McKinnons filling Station.

In 1947 the Bristol Manufacturing Co. was destroyed by fire. The cause was not known as the buildings were not in use.

In 1953 fire ruined two warehouses of Chester Way's and did heavy damage to Shadricks Garage and Kilbournes storehouse.

The dial telephone system went into use in 1958. Fire phones were installed in private homes from which alarms can be sounded at the hose house. This system has been very successful.

A nine hundred gallon tank truck is soon to be added to the equipment.

## Business Center

**Bristol Post Office** — We are indebted to Munsill's "Early History of Bristol" for the account of the early post offices in town. Mr. Munsill obtained his statistics from the Post Office Department in Washington, but their first three books were burned in 1836 so that the first postmaster listed by them is Jacob Caldwell, 1804. Mr. Munsill states that he remembers that Thaddeus McLaughlin was postmaster previous to this time and that he kept the office in the house built by his father in 1800 at the four corners a mile and a quarter west of the village, the place now known as Daniels' Corners. This evidences that the first post office was established in Bristol sometime between 1801 and 1803. Jacob Caldwell was succeeded in 1805 by his brother Isaac, but the office remained in the same place, in a log cabin kept as a public house by the two brothers, four miles northeast of Bristol village on the road to Starksboro. The post office was kept here for ten years, until 1815 when Joseph Otis was appointed postmaster and moved the office to his home in Bristol village. Since that time the office has never been outside of the village, although



for many years it was kept in the home or place of business of the current postmaster. In 1861 Winter Holley was postmaster and the office was kept in his store. The first separate residence of the postoffice of which we have a record was on the north side of Main Street where Abram's Department Store is now located. After the fire of 1898 the office was removed to the Drake-Farr block on the south of Main Street, where it remained until fire destroyed the block in 1914. After being located for a short period in the Grange Hall on Garfield Street it was moved to the Lathrop block, which was built in 1916 on the site which the Drake-Farr block had occupied. This is its present location.

In 1810 the mail was brought on horseback once a week from the Middlebury post office. Sometime between 1810 and 1849 the service was opened its entire distance in 1849, after which the mail delivery to was opened its entire distance in 1849, after which the delivery mail to Bristol was daily. The date of change of delivery for the Bristol mail from Middlebury to New Haven Depot is not definitely known, although it must have occurred sometime in the 1860's. After this the mail was brought by stage from the New Haven Depot twice a day. The stage continued to carry the mail for a few months after the Bristol Railroad was established in 1892, but it was soon brought by train. Since the Bristol Railroad stopped running in 1930 the mail is again brought by private carrier from New Haven, but there are now five daily deliveries to the Bristol post office instead of two.

On January 29, 1949, the first Highway Post Office, in this section, carried mail from Albany, N. Y. to Burlington, Vt. in lieu of mail by railroad, and on April 18, 1955, all mail service by the Rutland Railroad was discontinued permanently, all mail service now furnished by Highway Post Office and Mail Trucks, to New Haven, yet being brought by carrier to Bristol.

After 1900 there was a marked progress in postal service in the town. In 1901 the first R. F. D. route was chartered from the Bristol post office through Bristol Flats, South Bristol and parts of New Haven and Middlebury. Loren Jacobs was the first carrier. Within a year two other routes were started, Number 2, with George Dike as carrier went north and covered part of Monkton while Route 3 covered parts of Lincoln and Starksboro and had Fred Manum for its first carrier. About 1905 a fourth route was established through Bristol Notch and into Lincoln. M. U. Ross was carrier for this route. In 1923 Bristol became a second class office. In 1939 Routes 3 and 4 were consolidated, Russell Lowell now serving both routes, Walter Sheldon carrier for Route 1 and Roy Bicknell for Number 2.

On December 31, 1943, West Lincoln Post Office, which had been served through this office was closed and the patrons put on to the rural route from here.

November 15, 1952, the post office at South Lincoln was closed and the patrons were served by a Star Route from Lincoln. The South Lincoln mail had been routed through Bristol to that office.

June 16, 1954, Route 3 was discontinued and divided between routes 1 and 2. At present Route 1 carrier is Carleton Bosworth and Max Dumas serves Route 2.

A Star Route has been served through this office to the Post Office in Starksboro for over fifty years, the present carrier Arland Smith having served for forty-six years.

In the spring of 1955, the lease was renewed for quarters in the

Lathrop Block on the south side of Main Street, where the office has been located since 1916.

A re-arrangement of the Lobby and Work Room was made at this time. The interior was redecorated, new lighting installed, a metal screen line replaced the wood structure, 500 lock boxes were installed, and other new equipment, consisting of cabinets, desks, electric adding machine. new typewriter and safe were added.

On December 1, 1956, George L. Burt, Senior Clerk, was given the first appointment to, "Assistant to the Postmaster," in the history of his office, serving his 22nd year as clerk.

George F. Whitcomb the present postmaster, became Acting Postmaster on April 15, 1950, and was appointed postmaster on July 12, 1951.

**Hostelries of Bristol** — One of the first public houses in Bristol was a log house built by Henry McLaughlin in 1788 at what is now known as Daniel's Corner. In 1800 he built a brick house near the log cabin and continued his work as host to the public. This was the house where the first post office was located. The log house of the Caldwell Brothers, four miles northeast of Bristol village, on the Starksboro road, was also a public house and it was here that the post office was located from 1804-15. Robert Holley opened a house in Bristol village in 1808 and, at a later date, a house on Bristol Flats built by Robert Dunshee and sold to V. Miller was kept as a tavern by Mr. Miller. It was the house north of the Welden Prime house which was torn down in the early 1900's. A cellar hole remains to mark the site of the tavern.

The public house of early times which is of most interest to us today was that of Abram Gaige which was burned in 1817 and rebuilt by Mr. Gaige in 1820. This was the beginning of the Bristol House or Bristol Inn as it is now known. Mr. Gaige was landlord until 1835 and from that time until 1871 the place changed hands several times. In 1871 the hotel was bought by Mr. J. J. Ridley who continued as landlord until about 1896, except for a few months in 1893 between his sale of the house to Q. E. Grover and W. E. Frank and his repurchase of it. A rival hotel, the Commercial House, owned by Ryland Hatch, made its appearance in the 80's. Each hotel had its coach and two (not four) to convey passengers to and from New Haven Depot. Mr. Ridley advertised his house in the Bristol Herald in this way (taken from an issue in 1888): "It is 5½ miles from New Haven Depot. Stage connects with trains twice daily. Telegraph and livery connected with the house." Mr. Ridley was succeeded by Thomas Leonard, who in turn, was succeeded by Clement Burnham in 1906.

The Burnhams remodeled the house inside and out, redecorated the interior and planted shrubs, greatly increasing the attractiveness of the Inn. In 1930 they built the annex on the north side of the original structure. Mr. and Mrs. Burnham remained Host and Hostess at the Inn for nearly fifty years. Mr. Burnham sold the Inn in 1954 to Mr. Walter Palmer, who in turn sold it to the Dog Team Corp. in 1955. The Inn was purchased from the Dog Team Corp. in 1958 by its present owners, Mr. and Mrs. Earl Laviana, who came to Bristol from Castleton, Vermont. The Lavianas have made extensive repairs and improvements, preserving the New England atmosphere of the Inn. The improvements include a modern kitchen, a bar room finished in knotty pine with furnishings from the local furniture manufacturer, The Drake, Smith Co., Inc. and three dining rooms with a seating capacity of 365. There are 24 guest rooms, many furnished with antiques. The Currier



and Ives and glass collections at the Inn are outstanding and the gardens started by Mr. and Mrs. Burnham are maintained, enhanced this year by thousands of newly-planted bulbs.

The Inn today is a Duncan Hines eating place, well-known for fine service and excellent cooking. It is one of Bristol's best assets.

**Buildings** — One of the old established trade conveniences of the town of Bristol was the continuous and prosperous existence of the hardware store of S. D. Farr which was founded by Drake, Smith & Co. in 1869. In 1872 the Drake Farr block was built. About 1880 the interests of Mr. Drake were purchased by E. S. & S. D. Farr. Another change occurred in 1900 when S. D. Farr secured the interest of his partner. He not only carried a line of general hardware but sold Glenwood Stoves and ranges, tin, copper ware, cement and tiling and was prepared to do plumbing on the shortest notice possible.

This block was burned on February 10th, 1914 but was soon rebuilt. In 1916 N. Lathrop & Son bought the corner lot and built the present Post Office. After the death of S. D. Farr, his son Winfield carried on the hardware business for several years when it was sold to James Tomasi who continued in the hardware business a few years. He also added a large Freezer Plant. In 1948 the entire block was sold to the Van Raalte Company.

Ezra C. Dike started his Hardware Store in 1869 and continued for over fifty years. He built the so-called Dike block and had his business where the present A & P is located. His son Eddie continued in the business for several years.

Among the other successful business men were George Danforth and E. J. Bristol who built a large block on the North side of the Street. This partnership existed for sixteen years dealing in the jewelry, shoe and clothing business. They decided to dissolve about 1901 when Mr. Danforth bought the clothing business of Mr. Bristol and continued to handle the men's furnishing department as well as a line of trunks, suit cases, etc. Mr. Bristol stocked up with a fine line of foot wear and on the jewelry side could be found gold and silver watches, pins, solid and plated silverware, novelties, etc. He also employed a shoe maker who devoted his entire time to making shoes to order and repairing shoes.

Ramie Martin first started the paint and wall paper business on West Street in a store which had been conducted by J. R. Wills. After two years he moved into the store now operated by Mr. Chester Way. Mr. Martin kept a well stocked store carrying not only paint and paper but doors, windows, glass and all kinds of wood building material. After nearly forty years he sold to the present owners.

In 1902 Chas. Hathorn and Elmer Boynton formed a partnership to establish themselves in the hardware and plumbing business. They located in a store on West St. near Holley Hall. They carried a stock of paint, varnishes, stoves, ranges and heaters. The firm made a specialty of installing plumbing, steam and hot water heating plants, roofing and sheet metal work. After 34 years in business the partnership was dissolved and the building sold to make way for the Texaco Oil Company which soon located there.

Between the years of 1950 and 1955 about fifteen new houses were built in Bristol. Most of these were built on upper end of North St.

**Bristol Bands** — Band concerts have been enjoyed in Bristol for many years. As early as the 70's concerts have been played on the





Aerial View of Village



park, where people gathered from miles around to visit with their friends and listen to the band play their weekly concerts. In 1884 the Cornet band was formed and, at the same time, there was a Cornet band in Lincoln. These two bands often played together. In 1886 a rival, called the Citizen's Band was formed to share the honors. Neither band was mentioned after the appearance of the Bristol Military Band, which was formed in the middle 90's. The only lights available to the early musicians were kerosene torches, which were held by the lads present. This difficulty was overcome, almost from the beginning of the Military Band, when electric lights were installed in the band stand.

A new modern band stand with cover was erected in the year 1937 at a cost of \$576.50. With the covered stand, of course, concerts can continue even thru rain storms.

During the last decade, girls have been admitted to the band and several youths are also members. Leaders of the band have been, George Guinan, Howard Haseltine, John Selden, David Aubin, William Andrews and Franklin Comstock. Roy Clark is the present leader.

As many of the older members have passed away, guest players from Vergennes, Middlebury and Burlington have been a great help, enabling them to continue the concerts for a number of years.

Each year, the town appropriates a sum of money for the support of the band and the members, unlike earlier days, are supplied with their instruments.

At almost every concert, different organizations hold bazaars on the park which enable them to raise money for their various projects.

Concerts are held now every Wednesday evening from Memorial Day through Labor Day inclusive.

**First National Bank of Bristol** — The first bank in Bristol failed after being in operation only two years. S. M. Dorr's Sons of Rutland began their banking business in 1891 and closed the bank in 1893.

The First National Bank of Bristol was chartered in May, 1902 with Chase Bush, E. B. Patterson, W. E. Hanks, Ralph Denio, and F. R. Dickerman as directors. In 1924 at the time of the big fire which destroyed so many buildings on the south side of Main Street, the bank building was burned and the following year the present brick structure was erected. The bank has continued to grow with the community, with assets increasing from \$430,338.04 in 1924 to \$1,671,774.88 in 1959. The present board of Directors consists of Ralph C. Sweet, L. H. Landon, R. C. Martin, D. L. Garland, W. C. Little, Gordon H. Brown, and Dr. H. E. Williamson with Ralph Sweet as President.

## Military History

**Military** — The first militia company in Bristol was organized June 7, 1791. It was the 10th Company, 2nd Regiment, 6th Brigade Vermont Infantry. Another company, the Light Infantry was organized June 1, 1808, with John Kilbourn, Captain and Jehiel Saxton Lieutenant. Very gay were these infantrymen in their uniforms which consisted of scarlet coats with white and buff facing, white pants with black half-gaiters, white vest, black stockings and citizen's round hat with a brass piece in front. These companies did their full share in helping enforce the Embargo Act of 1808 and in fighting in the War of 1812. Sixty-six men from Bristol took part in the Battle of Plattsburg.

The last veteran of the Civil War was Lester Bryant who died in

1936 at the age of 98. Mr. Bryant did not enlist from Bristol but came to Bristol from Lincoln a few years before his death.

The observance of Memorial Day in Bristol began in 1889, the money being obtained by popular subscription at first. Soon money was donated by the town at the annual town meeting for this purpose to the Bristol Post of the G. A. R., known as the W. C. Dunton Post. The money is now donated to the American Legion. In 1928 the Women's Relief Corps, affiliated with the G. A. R., placed a bronze tablet on the park in memory of the soldiers from Bristol who participated in the Civil War.

A chapter of another Civil War organization was formed in Bristol sometime during the 1890's. The N. F. Dunshee Camp Sons of Veterans was formed at this time and met regularly for many years. The camp was named after Colonel N. F. Dunshee because of his splendid record as a soldier in the Civil War.

There are no records of Spanish-American War veterans obtainable. The only men from Bristol known to have taken part in this conflict were David Bosworth, Judson Hanks, Vern Brooks, Harold Foyles, Mr. Tabor, Walter Shedrick, and Claude Guinan.

A record of the Bristol men who served in the World War I is on a bronze tablet in the park, which was placed there by the Bristol Post of the American Legion.

There were approximately 169 that served during World War II of whom 8 died while serving. There were about 5 women who also served.

**American Legion** — The American Legion Post #19 was organized in Bristol soon after the World War with Dr. Williamson as Commander. Meetings were first held in the Town Hall, then in the old Grange Hall on Garfield street. There was very little interest shown for some years and the charter was surrendered. They reorganized about five years later and in 1951 reached a peak of membership of over 200, this being due to World War II Veterans.

A new Legion home was built on a section of the recreation field. It was completed and opened May 1953.

A baseball team was formed in 1946 and lasted until 1956 at which time it became a town team.

One of the biggest yearly activities is the Carnival which is sponsored by two organizations, Legion and Recreation Club. This was started in 1955 and has been a great success, the carnival lasting 3 to 5 days.

The Legion sponsors the Boys State. They see to it that 2 boys are sent to Boys' State every year, the expense being shared between the Legion and other organizations in Bristol.

The American Legion Auxiliary was also formed, functioned a short time and then gave up its charter. The Auxiliary reorganized in 1935 and now has a membership of about 60. It contributes to many charitable organizations and also sponsors 2 girls to Girls' State, with the help of other clubs. This is done every year.



came  
the  
was  
to the  
The  
men's  
in the  
in the  
ristol  
erans  
camp  
ecord  
tain-  
con-  
oyles,  
I is  
ristol  
ar II  
serv-  
nized  
nder.  
all on  
years  
years  
being  
field.  
which  
spon-  
s was  
g 3 to  
ys are  
en the  
ned a  
anized  
many  
, with



The Maples - Home of the late Merritt Allen

## People of Note

**Merritt P. Allen** — The following article appeared in the September, 1954, issue of "Young Wings": "You'll Always Find a Way Out," by Merritt Parmelee Allen.

I was born and raised here on a farm at Bristol, Vermont, where my family have lived for generations. I took for granted that I would continue that way of life, and I learned how to care for livestock and soils; how to work and how to handle the Yankee hired man, who is the most independent person on earth.

We took our fun wherever and whenever we found it. We hunted, trapped and played ball in the pasture. Some of the boys wanted to be President, but I dreamed only of becoming a big league pitcher or a Hudson Bay Trapper. Without radio and television, we had to use our imagination by reading and re-creating what we read. Fortunately I had access to good books. And there never were and never will be any periodicals to match the Youth's Companion and St. Nicholas. In later years I had the honor of contributing to both magazines.

So it went until at the age of seventeen, while I was in high school I was knocked flat by polio. I came back enough to be on my feet a little but most of the time has been spent in a wheel chair. Every plan I had dreamed of making had to be scrapped and a new set of values built to meet the situation. Formal education was out; self education began and is still very much in progress.

My thoughts turned to writing. I had to learn to use a whole new set of tools and invent others to meet my needs. So the product was long in taking shape. Slowly a few pieces passed inspection by publishers. Now I have written short stories and serials, radio serials and one act plays, parts of half a dozen anthologies, and more than twenty-eight books for boys, most of them adventure yarns based on American history.

I am telling you this on the chance that it may reach someone who thinks all doors have been slammed in his face. If he will try and keep on trying long after common sense tells him to quit, he will find a door that can be opened. He will need help, the indispensable help of family and friends, for no one, no matter how tough he thinks he is, can do it alone. Especially will he need the help of someone like Vera Cline, who has been my nurse and partner for many years. She intuitively understands many things I never could figure out. And we find pleasure in work, friends, birds and flowers.

Merritt P. Allen was born on July 2, 1892 and died December 26, 1954. Among his many books are — The Green Cockade, The Mudhen, The Silver Wolf, The Spirit of the Eagle, Western Star, The Wilderness Way and The Sun Trail.

**Colonel Noble F. Dunshee** — In looking back to the late 1800's and early 1900's some of the Old Timers (if any of the species are still around) would distinctly recall a citizen who was well known throughout Addison County and in many parts of this state. During his long life he had many interesting experiences. This was Mr. Noble F. Dunshee, quite commonly called Colonel Dunshee.

Mr. Dunshee was born April 4th, 1833 and spent most of his life in Bristol. In 1849 Mr. Dunshee with two friends went to California to the gold fields but evidently did not make any startling "strikes." In his stop in Denver he became very interested in the town and pur-



hased a sizable piece of real estate. Some of his ideas were used as plans went forward to build the city in its beautiful location.

In February 1857 Mr. Dunshee married Charlotte Soper, the ceremony being performed by Rev. David Bosworth. Less than ten years later rumblings of the Civil War were troubling the whole country. It is known that Mr. Dunshee organized at Bristol on Sept. 8, 1862 the Vermont State Volunteer Militia. It was mustered into United States service at Brattleboro, Vermont October 21, 1862. Mr. Dunshee was Captain of his Co. G. 14th Regiment and served until the end of the war.

In 1863 Mr. Dunshee was a member of the State Legislature. Governor Gregory Smith on July 18, 1864 appointed Mr. Dunshee to recruit 100,000 volunteers for the State of Vermont. These were to be found among the Negroes of South Carolina and Florida.

For many years Mr. Dunshee and his family lived on West Street, the house being an old landmark of the town. In 1957 this house was moved back to make way for a Gulf Oil Station. He started a dry goods business in 1883 in company with Willis Peake. Later he established himself in the so-called Dunshee block. Here with his son he carried on an active dry goods store until his death in 1893 at the age of 90 years. His son Harry continued with the business for several years.

Mr. N. F. Dunshee was known far and near as a fine business man and reliable in all his dealings. At times interested in politics, but a love for fine race horses was his outstanding hobby. He owned and drove some fine racers. In later years he with Mr. E. C. Dike and Mr. F. R. Dickerman celebrated April 4th together at the Bristol House, all three having their birthdays on that date.

**Jeremiah Curtin** — An old field stone house at Greendale, Wisconsin, once the home of Jeremiah Curtin, author, is now an historical museum. Mr. Curtin, who was born in 1835, was much in demand as a translator and is perhaps best known for his interpretation of "Quo Vadis" from the Polish of Sienkiewicz, a book he placed on the best-seller list. While in this country, Mr. and Mrs. Curtin made their home with her sister, the late Mrs. A. M. Norton. After his death in 1906 Mrs. Curtin completed and published many of his works and finished his biography. The last fifteen years of her life she lived with her sister at her home on Mountain Street. There is another reason for honoring Jeremiah Curtin — he was a brother to all of the world. The inscription on his tomb in Greenwood Cemetery, Bristol, written by President Theodore Roosevelt, says, "He traveled over the whole wide world, calling all men his brothers and learning to speak to them in seventy languages."

**William A. Lawrence** — In the history of Bristol the name of William Lawrence should occupy a conspicuous place, for through many years he was one of the leading factors of the town, progressive and persevering. He was known as the most extensive dealer in horses in the Green Mountain State. He was born in Monkton, Vermont, September 21, 1856. He attended the High School in Vergennes, after which he returned to farming on the home place until 1881, when he came to Bristol and began speculating in cattle, horses and farm products until 1884. That year he embarked in the carriage business which he continued for the following fifteen years. In 1899 he turned his entire attention to his stock business, buying horses in carload lots

in Iowa and Missouri

He usually kept about seventy-five in his stables. His business covered not only Vermont but also New York. He erected several dwellings in Bristol, among them his home on North Street at the corner of Spring Street, now owned by Mr. and Mrs. John Cragen.

In March, 1876, Mr. Lawrence was married to Lockie Partch of Hinesburg. She died in December, 1889. For his second wife Mr. Lawrence chose Minnie Morrison Peet of Starksboro whom he married in March, 1901.

For fourteen years Mr. Lawrence was Sheriff of Addison County. He served as President of the Addison County Agriculture Society, was one of the Directors of the National Bank of Middlebury, was a Vice-President of the Vermont Mutual Fire Insurance Co. While President of the Greenwood Cemetery Association he was instrumental in getting the water piped in and connected to the fountain which he had contributed. It was through his efforts and financial help that the fence was built that enclosed the entire cemetery.

His wife, Minnie Lawrence, was killed in a Rutland Railroad collision in Vergennes in 1906. Soon after her death he built the Lawrence Library as a memorial to his two wives, Lockie Partch and Minnie Peet. The large window in the Methodist Church was also a memorial in the Lawrence name. The houses on Lawrence Lane as well as the one by the Library, were deeded to the Library Association with the income from same to go to the Association.

Mr. Lawrence died in March, 1915, at the age of 59.

**Munsills** — The Munsills figured extensively in the early transactions of the Town of Bristol. Captain Gurdon Munsill was born in Windsor, Conn., October 26, 1760 and came to Bristol in 1789 where he lived in a log house which he had built. He was the first collector of taxes, a selectman and represented the town in 1796.

Judge Harvey Munsill one of his eight children served the town in many capacities. He was Judge of Probate, 1836 to 1870, Justice of Peace for over thirty years. He also served the town as selectman, town clerk, town agent and moderator. He was a town representative and a State Senator in 1842-1843. He was Captain of the First Brigade Third Division Vermont Militia. From 1828 to 1866 he was Master of Libanus Lodge. He died on April 11, 1876 full of years and covered with honor.

His only son Harvey was born in Bristol June 22, 1824. He took over his father's real estate and at one time owned all the land west of Maple Street. He assisted in planting many of the maple trees on the streets of the town. He planted all of them on Maple Street. He was a graduate of Middlebury College and practiced law. He dealt extensively in real estate and has made several creditable additions to the village plot of Bristol. He will not be forgotten, as Munsill Avenue took his name and we also have an N. H. Munsill Hose Co.

**The Hasseltines** — About 1820, Joseph Hasseltine settled in Bristol. His son Levi became a physician and practiced in Bristol for many years. His oldest son, Amos E. Hasseltine, was born in 1811, and about 1840 he settled in Bristol on the farm which he bought of his father-in-law, John Brooks. This farm, situated on Bristol Flats, is now owned by George Burritt. He built the large house on this farm in 1856. He had one son, Erwin A. Hasseltine, who probably was the most widely-known member of the family during his lifetime.



Erwin A. Hasseltine was born in Bristol, April 30, 1838, in a brick house on the East-West road of the New Haven River. This road, now abandoned, joined the Carlstrom road. Erwin Hasseltine was brought up on the farm on Bristol Flats, where he attended the district school then known as Bristol Academy. He later attended Middlebury College, graduating in 1862. After teaching school for a few years, he took up farming on the place later owned by his son, Howard S. Hasseltine. He set out the maple grove now standing on the place west of the main road. Later, he moved to and operated, jointly with his father, the farm on Bristol Flats.

Mr. Hasseltine was always deeply interested in education. In 1888, he was appointed supervisor of schools in Addison County, which position he held until 1892, when the county supervisor system was abolished by law. He then served as examiner of teachers in Addison County for several years. He was a member of the first board of school directors in Bristol and served as superintendent for several years. In 1900, he was elected judge of the Probate Court for the District of New Haven, which position he held for fourteen years. He died November 7, 1923, at the age of eighty-five.

Judge Hasseltine had three sons. George, the oldest, graduated from Middlebury College and then studied law. At one time, he was a practicing attorney in Bristol. Another son, Howard, has lived in Bristol all his life and was well-known as a fine musician. He was a member of the Bristol Military Band from 1905 until his death in 1958 and was its leader for many years. A third son, Herman E., attended Middlebury College and later graduated from the Baltimore Medical College in 1904. He became an officer of the Public Health Service and served in that capacity in many places in the United States, as well as Alaska and Hawaii. His service in Hawaii was at the United States Leprosy Station where he spent three years. Later, Dr. Hasseltine was placed in charge of the United States Public Health Service Hospital at Carville, Louisiana, where he served five years. (1935-1940). In 1938, he was chairman of the United States delegation to the International Leprosy Congress in Cairo, Egypt. He retired in 1945 and now spends his summers at his home in Bristol, Vermont.

**The Munsons, Our Park** — Captain Noble Munson was born in St. George. After a few years he built and occupied the house now owned by George Nicklaw. Here he lived until his death in 1851. He was in the Battle of Plattsburg. He served the town for many years as selectman, representative and was the town treasurer for 31 successive years. He was Captain of the 4th Co. Infantry in the 2nd Regiment. Captain Munson was regarded as one of our best and most respected citizens.

Luman Munson was also one of our early settlers and built one of our first frame houses now owned by Stearns Gay. The Munsons owned all the land extending between North, West and Church Streets.

The following deed is recorded in Volume 7, Page 120 of Bristol Land Records, . . .

In consideration of the friendship, love, esteem and good will we have for the town of Bristol we quit claim a certain piece of land of about one and one-half acres of land for the express purpose of a public Common and Green and it is particular understood that the Selectmen of the town or any person shall not be at liberty to erect or build any house, shop or any building or fence the same up, or in-





**Bosworth Homestead**



**Gaige Moor Home**



lumber in any wise by rolling logs or packing lumber, stone, brick, lime, clay, earth, or dig up the earth. It shall be and remain as a public Common without anything being built or laid there on.

In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands and seals the 21st day of April, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Twenty-seven.

Luman Munson,

George C. Dayfoot.

Attest

Winston H. Holley,  
Town Clerk.

Bristol, Vermont, April 21st, 1827.

**Arthur W. Prince** — We surely cannot pass by one person known to all the people of Bristol. By this we refer to Arthur W. Prince, more commonly called DUDE. For more than a score of years he was the uniformed coachman who met every train in town to pick up guests going to the Bristol Hotel.

In the 1930's Dude first began winding the clock located in the belfry of Holley Hall, but after more than twenty-five years he has now given up this task to a younger man.

To help our Arthur "Dude" Prince to celebrate his 80th birthday a party was held in Holley Hall September 24, 1955. In a spontaneous outburst of love and respect more than 200 people made it a memorable occasion for him. A big birthday cake with 80 candles on it was wheeled into the Hall for the party. A purse of nearly \$350 was presented to Dude.

**Bristol Doctors** — The list of doctors is incomplete and in many cases no data is available. Where only one date is given that represents the date at which practice was begun in Bristol. The first eleven doctors fall into this list: Dr. Joseph Cable, 1794; Dr. James Day, 1799-1814; Dr. Robert Smith, 1803; Dr. Joseph Needham, 1813-1833; Dr. William Warner, 1843; Dr. Tousely; Dr. Frederick Wheeler; Dr. Levi Hasseltine; Dr. S. A. Skinner; Dr. J. H. Steele; Dr. White.

Dr. Elon B. Prime was born in Bristol in 1843, graduated from Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia in 1870 and from the Royal College of Edinburgh, Scotland in 1882. He practiced one year in Glasgow, then returned to his native country and after three years of practice elsewhere settled in Bristol where he practiced ten years until his death in 1896.

Dr. E. M. Kent, son of Dr. Marble Kent who had also practiced in Bristol, graduated from the University of Vermont Medical College in 1866, establishing himself in Bristol that same year where he remained until his death. In his later years he changed from the practice of medicine to that of pharmacy and opened a drug store on the south side of Main Street. Some years after his death his heirs sold this store to W. W. Wilson. This store known as the "South Side Drug Store," is now owned by R. F. Boynton.

Dr. Ashbel Dean, born in Monkton in 1857, graduated from the New York University Medical College in 1878. He immediately settled in Bristol where he soon built up an extensive practice and became closely associated with the business and political life of the town. Like Dr. Kent he changed to pharmacy in his later years and opened a drug store on the north side of Main Street. He died in Bristol in 1899. His son Leon Dean is a retired English professor from the

University of Vermont. He has written several historical novels based on early history of Vermont and the surrounding area.

Dr. D. A. Bisbee graduated from the University of Michigan in 1875 and came here in 1879 where he began the practice of medicine, later changing to pharmacy. During the 1880's and 1890's we have three physicians in Bristol of whom we know little: Dr. Allen, Dr. Edgar Walker and Dr. E. I. Hall. Of Dr. Hall however, we know that he was a homeopathic doctor and that he remained for some time.

Dr. George Farnham graduated from the University of Vermont Medical College in 1884. Although here only two years, 1884-86, he started the prize speaking contests, also the first lecture course ever given in Bristol. Among the lecturers in this course were Henry Ward Beecher and Russell Conwell who gave his famous lecture, "Acres of Diamonds."

Dr. Homer Bogue graduated from the University of Vermont Medical College in 1886 and settled here the following year when he bought Dr. Prime's house on the corner of North and Garfield Streets. In 1894 he sold his house and practice to Dr. G. F. Edmunds, moving to California on account of his health, where he was an outstanding surgeon and physician in Ontario, California.

Dr. Anson Norton was born in Bristol in 1863 and graduated from the University of Vermont Medical College in 1889. He soon established himself in Bristol where he was prominent in school affairs and the political life of the town, serving as town representative in the state legislature. He always considered the health of the community more important than his own and gave of his service without stint. This was strikingly illustrated in the influenza epidemic of 1919 when he made more than 100 calls a day, an effort which took a toll of his strength which he could never replace. Seriously ill for two years he died in August, 1921.

Dr. George F. Edmunds was born in Irasburg and was a boyhood friend of Dr. Homer Bogue. He came with his family to Bristol as a bookkeeper for S. R. Cain & Co. about 1890. Soon after his arrival here he became interested in the study of medicine, studying by himself in his spare time with some help from Dr. Bogue. He attended the University of Vermont Medical College, later transferring to Baltimore Medical College from which he graduated. In 1894 he bought Dr. Bogue's practice and served Bristol as a physician for the rest of his life. For many years he was town health officer and served in the capacity of county health officer for several years. His aim was "to make Bristol the cleanest and healthiest town in the state" and due to his untiring efforts he saw many of his plans materialize. He also served the town as representative to the state legislature and as a member of the town school board. Due to failing health Dr. Edmunds spent his last winters in Florida but continued to see his patients during the summer as long as he was able. He died in Florida in the winter of 1939.

In the late 1890's Dr. Francis Briggs, a graduate of Bowdoin College and Baltimore Medical College settled in Bristol. He was a skilled surgeon as well as a physician and built up a large practice. Dr. Briggs was a great lover of music and had a fine tenor voice which was available for his friends' service and for social functions in the town at all times. He was a member of the Bristol Military Band for many years. He also served the town in a political capacity as representative to the legislature. Ill with diabetes for five years he refused



to consider his own health and attended his patients until within three weeks of his death which occurred in June, 1924.

Dr. Harold Williamson was born in Huntington, Vermont and attended the University of Vermont where he graduated from the Medical College. He established himself as a physician in Bristol in 1906. He also served the town ably as a member of the school board, as health officer and as town representative and county senator. For several years before his death in 1953, he was the President of the First National Bank of Bristol.

Dr. Max Thompson, a graduate of the University of Vermont Medical College came to Bristol in the early 1920's where he remained for about three years, at the end of which time he settled in Rutland. Although here only for a short time Dr. Thompson built up a good sized practice and became quite popular.

Dr. Edward Lane came to Bristol in 1924 from North Ferrisburg where he had practiced for a number of years, establishing a practice he maintained here until the time of his death in March, 1939. Quiet and unassuming in his manner he made many friends and built up a large practice for himself.

Dr. Charles S. Paine, born and brought up in Randolph, graduated from the University of Vermont College of Medicine in 1932 and settled in Bristol in October, 1933 where he soon built up a large practice and made many friends. He was especially interested in music and when possible sang in the Baptist Church choir and played in the Bristol Band. He died suddenly in December, 1952.

Dr. A. Harry Roller, a native of Jersey City, who graduated from the University of Vermont Medical College in 1935, established himself in Bristol in the summer of 1939 and very soon built up a sizable practice. He died suddenly in February, 1948.

In 1947, Dr. Harold E. Williamson took over the office used by his father, Dr. Harold Williamson, for so many years. A graduate of the University of Vermont College of Medicine, he had seen several years of service in the U. S. Navy. He was chosen to go on the Antarctic Expedition, "Operation High Jump" and served as Senior Medical Officer, Flight Surgeon, on the U. S. S. Pine Island. He left Norfolk, Va. in December 1946 and returned to San Francisco in December 1947. He not only has a large practice but serves the town as the Public Health Officer.

Dr. Charles K. Johnson came to Bristol about 1946. He is a professor emeritus of pediatrics at the University of Vermont Medical College. He was the first certified pediatrician in Vermont and continued his practice in Bristol until his health failed in 1958.

Dr. Lindsay Robinson, a graduate of Toronto Medical College, came to Bristol in 1952. He proved to be a very efficient doctor but his poor health finally forced him to give up his practice here.

In 1909 two dentists began the practice of their profession in Bristol. Dr. R. J. Bristol, who was born in the town, graduated from the University of Pennsylvania Dental College and returned to practice in his native town. Dr. Watson Morgan, a native of Lincoln, graduated from Baltimore Dental College and began his practice here at about the same time. Both men built up large practices and were always willing supporters of any moves for civic betterment. In 1924 Dr. Morgan's office and equipment were burned and he moved to Burlington to prac-

tice. Because of poor health, Dr. Bristol retired from his office in 1946 and died in 1955.

Dr. William Cardell, a native of Bristol, graduated from New York University Dental School and opened an office here in 1946. Since that date he has been the only dentist in town.

## Homes

**Gaige-Moor** — On North Street next to the Bristol Inn stands the large white house, once used as a Community House, but now the home of Mr. James Tomasi and his family. Through an arrangement in 1939 with Mr. Kenneth Ives and the town of Bristol, this home was used as a meeting place for both the Girl Scouts and the Boy Scouts, the Outlook Club, and other organizations. A special committee was in charge of the property. But when after a short time the heating and other expenses proved to be too high, the place reverted to its owners and was soon sold. Mr. Tomasi has modernized it but has kept the beautiful lines of the original.

This lovely house, one of the early homes in Bristol, was built by Abram Gaige, who also helped to build the Bristol Inn in 1817. Mr. Gaige, as the story goes, was always singing. A verse from a poem in the **Bristol Herald** follows:

“Jack of all Trades was his title of rank,  
And man about town his degree,  
But the virtue in which he excelled other men-  
His tune sung in buoyant glee.  
Whether hammering nails while building Gaige-Moor  
Or laying hearth-stones at the Inn,  
His voice could be heard in rare melody  
Above the racket and din.”

Susan, daughter of Abram Gaige, married a man named Moor, and Abram Moor was born at Gaige-Moor. His daughter, Rose Moor Ives, and two sons spent some time in Bristol, living in the old homestead. To the memory of her father, Mrs. Ives has erected a sun dial in Greenwood Cemetery. Carved upon the brass dial are these words:

“Let others tell of storms and showers;  
I only mark your sunny hours.”

**The Bosworth Homestead** — One of the charms of our New England villages has always been “the green,” surrounded by its fine old houses and its white churches with their steeples pointing to the sky. Visitors to Bristol notice especially the dignified old house facing the park and bearing over its door the Latin motto: “Animus valet” — “All is well with the soul.” Serene it stands behind its interesting wooden fence, as it has stood for so many years.

The Bosworth family, who occupied it so long, has long been prominent in Bristol and for many years owned the Bristol Manufacturing Company. A member of the family still owns the house. David Bosworth, Sr., was known as Elder Bosworth and was an Adventist.

It is interesting to note that the first Quarterly Conference of the Methodist Church was held in the Bosworth barn, since at that time the Methodists had no local church building. The weathervane now on the barn was formerly on the Baptist Church before it was remodeled in 1925.



1948

York  
Sinc

ds the  
me of  
with  
as a  
utlook  
rge of  
other  
d was  
autifu

buil  
Mr.  
poer



The Park Bristol Vermont

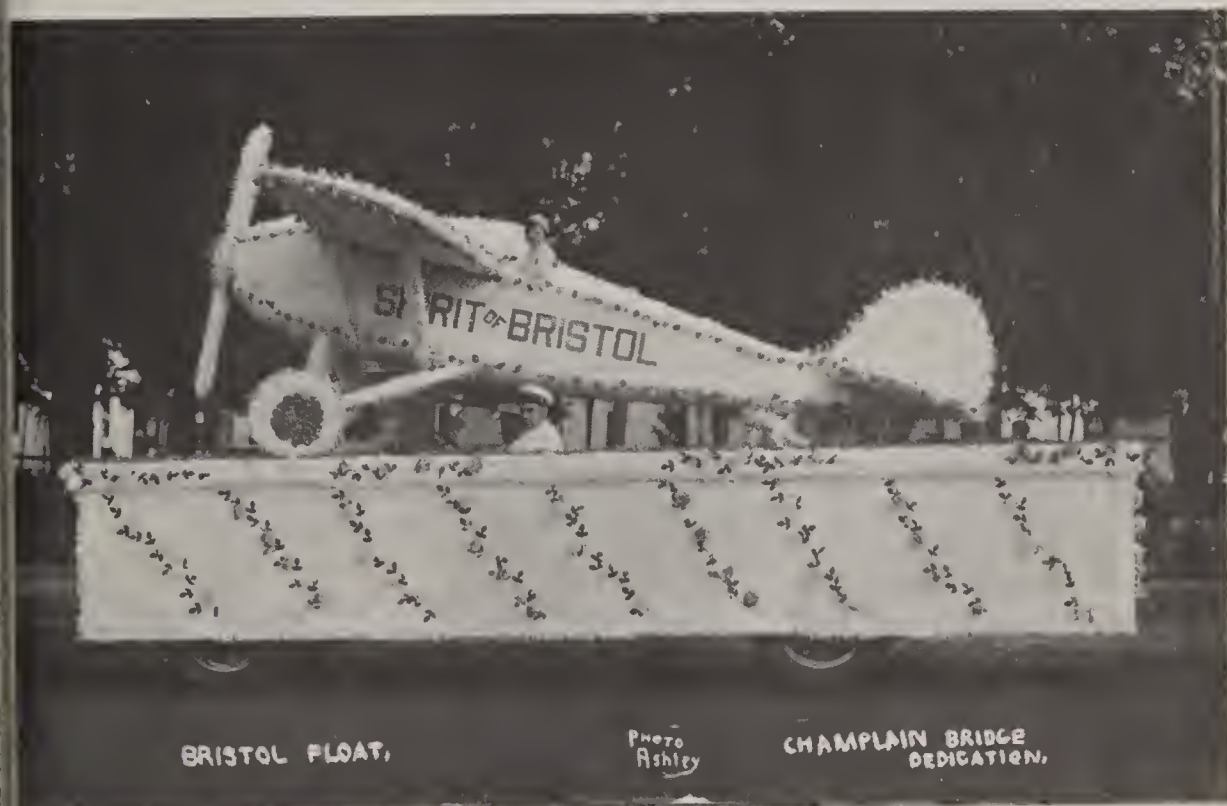
### Bristol Common

Moore  
e Moore  
home  
un dia  
words

inglan  
house  
Visitors  
e park  
"All  
wooden

a prom-  
ecturing  
sworth

ence of  
at that  
nervane  
it was



BRISTOL FLOAT,

PHOTO  
Ashley

CHAMPLAIN BRIDGE  
DEDICATION.

### Champlain Bridge Dedication 1929

There were many log houses in town but perhaps the barn built soon after 1800 might have been the first frame building. The two big front parlors and the upstairs bedrooms with the hallways and staircase were added at a later date. The columned front porch was built at the same time. The present fireplace in the living room was designed by Miss Helen Bosworth and was built about 1923 on the foundations of the ancient fireplace "with its stack of chimneys, its ovens, hanging crane, and various utensils used for all cooking and heating of house."

The former carriage house was converted into a studio for the use of Miss Grace Bosworth. The house is filled with many proofs of her artistic talents; the lovely oil paintings, the hand-painted china, and the murals in the dining room are among the most noteworthy. The house is also full of many antiques, whose family history has been written by Miss Helen Bosworth. The beautiful sketches are by her sister.

Near the studio is the charming and unusual garden designed by Madame Caroline Bosworth who was born November 1, 1840, and lived in this house for many years. The garden was fashioned into thirteen beds to represent the thirteen original colonies, with each bed encircled by stone borders. Of historical interest is the peony bed whose original roots are said to have been brought from China by an ancestor who was a sea captain.

Much more might be said about this house. All in all, the Bosworth homestead is of great historical interest, not only the house itself, but the fascinating and unusual furnishings and works of art with which it is filled.

## Lodges and Societies

**Outlook Club** — On the afternoon of June 19, 1900 a small group of eleven women met and organized a club, known for some time as the Literary Club. Later, when the Constitution was adopted, it was changed to the Outlook Club of Bristol, and has remained as such for six decades. The membership was limited to twenty-five with dues 25 cents annually.

For years the club had a miscellaneous program. It studied foreign countries, people and customs, the United States and Vermont. Members derived much pleasure and profit from the Bay View Course of Reading which continued for years. The social affairs of the Club were outstanding, as everyone was untiring in their efforts to make each occasion a success.

The Club has sponsored many worthwhile projects for village improvement thereby becoming an organized factor for the promotion of these things which make for betterment.

The Club joined the State Federation of Women's Clubs in 1912. This broadened its view and increased its activities. It has, through the Federation Extension, secured many fine speakers. The State Federation meetings are a source of inspiration to those who attend, and the visits of Federation Presidents have kept members in touch with the great work and given an incentive to move forward with renewed zeal.

The club joined the General Federation in 1936. Its membership is limited now to sixty members, but the club hopes soon to increase that number.



The future looks bright for the Outlook Club.

**Country Club** — In 1929 a small group of people organized for the purpose of securing a Golf Course and club house. A farm was purchased north of the village. The Clubhouse was opened October 1st, 1930. The Country Club proved to be a big asset for Bristol for several years. However after a short time, due to the expensive upkeep, the Club was obligated to discontinue its activities and the house and golf course were sold.

**Home Demonstration Club** — A very active Home Demonstration Club has been meeting in Bristol for several years. The meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month in the homes of one of the members where a noon lunch is served. Many interesting subjects are discussed such as nutrition, home management, decoration, etc.

**Grange** — The first Grange was started soon after 1900. At first they held their meetings in the I. O. O. F. Hall. After a few years they purchased their own hall on Garfield Street. There were many interesting meetings with good attendance at first, but after a few years they surrendered their Charter. On June 9th, 1941, Henry A. Stoddard, Master of Vermont State Grange, organized Bristol Valley Grange #543 with thirty charter members. This grange is still active today.

**Rotary Club** — The Bristol Rotary Club was organized on March 17, 1951. Meetings are held on Monday nights. They have shown their interest and helped financially in many town and school projects. They sponsor the Boy Scouts. The grounds around the Lord's Prayer Rock have been greatly improved, and tables and fire places built by members of the Rotary Club.

**P. T. A.** — A Parent Teachers Association was organized in Bristol on October 21, 1919 with the following elected officers, President Mrs. Lena Denio, Vice President, Mrs. E. W. Gould, Secretary, Miss Alta Cooley. The P. T. A. has continued an active part in raising the standards of our schools and curriculum and in the betterment of mental and physical health and well being of our youth and community since that date. The P. T. A. was the first to sponsor school lunches and clinics for pre-school children.

In 1959 the officers are: President, Mr. Neil Frink; Vice President, Mrs. Francis Baslow; Sec., Mrs. Paul Jette; Treas., Mr. Graham Palmer.

**Masons** — Libanus Lodge No. 71 F. & A. M. was consecrated December 13, 1826, by the Grand Lodge of the State of Vermont.

The first petition for membership in this Lodge was received from Daniel Collins and he was elected to membership on January 10, 1827.

According to Grand Lodge proceedings, Libanus Lodge No. 71 was active in their records for the years 1827-28-29-30, and again in 1833. There is no record of activity in 1831 and 1832. The last meeting of Libanus Lodge No. 71 was held September 8, 1829. Due to the Anti-Masonic Era, the Lodge surrendered its charter along with many other Lodges.

In September of 1858 several of the Freemasons of Bristol met and appointed H. Munsill to secure a dispensation under which they might meet until the next meeting of the Grand Lodge of Vermont. The dispensation was secured and the first meeting was held October 11, 1858. At this time, it was voted to meet the second Monday of each month at 1:00 o'clock in the afternoon. The charter was granted

January 13, 1859 by the Grand Lodge in session. On February 14, 1859 Libanus Lodge No. 47 was instituted.

In the year ending December 27, 1859 an all-time record of degrees were worked consisting of thirty-three (33) Entered Apprentice, thirty-two (32) Fellow Craft and thirty (30) Master Masons making a total of ninety-five (95) for the twelve months period or an average of eight (8) per month.

On May 13, 1861, the Lodge voted \$65 to be expended to buy land for the use of building a lodge room. In the ensuing months the building was erected on a site, the location of which is not positively known, but somewhere on the north side of Main Street. In January of 1872 the building was destroyed by fire. Meetings were held in the Dunshee block until another hall was built by the Masons which was finished for use about March 10, 1873. This new hall was dedicated by the Grand Lodge of Vermont on November 11, 1873. This hall was located on the third floor of the block owned by Mrs. D. A. Bisbee. The last meeting was held here October 24, 1898 due to a fire on October 26, 1898 which destroyed it along with several other buildings. Masonic meetings were then held for a time in the I. O. O. F. hall in the Hatch block and they used it until February, 1899.

After this, meetings were held in a new hall which had been built by Brother E. J. Bristol and Brother George A. Danforth. This hall was on the second story, and the first meeting was held on March 13, 1899. On March 1, 1909 the Lodge moved to rooms in the Dike Block on the north side of Main Street.

On February 6, 1922 Libanus Lodge bought the lots between the Farr block and Noah Lathrop block on the south side of Main Street but finally sold them, deciding the cost of building a hall here would be too much of a financial burden.

In August, 1948 Libanus Lodge bought the Congregational Church for their lodge room. There is a membership of 195 at this writing in April, 1959.

**Order of Eastern Star** — The Order of Eastern Star was installed in May, 1901 with forty seven charter members. There were 102 members in 1940.

At the rewriting of this history, Mrs. Minnie Smith, now residing in Rutland, Vermont is the only surviving charter member. There is a membership in this year 1959 of 123. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday evening of each month, except June, July and August, in the Masonic hall.

**I. O. O. F.** — Bristol Lodge No. 36 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows was instituted at Bristol, Vermont, July 8, 1898 with twenty-six Charter members. Within a few years the membership had increased to one hundred forty five.

The Lodge was so progressive that in the early part of the 1900's an Encampment was instituted taking in a great number of the subordinate branch. In 1915 the members helped organize and institute other encampments in the district.

In 1916 a Canton was instituted which is the military branch of the order. Canton members were as active as the other branches, contributing to the community by participating in the Memorial and Independence Day Celebrations. They were always a gala unit with their uniforms and plumes.





Split Rocks Bristol, Vermont

Split Rock - 8 ft. 4 in. Clearance



Lord's Prayer Rock

Both Encampment and Canton have surrendered their charters however and members remaining joined with either Murna Encampment at Vergennes or Dunmore Encampment at Middlebury and Canton Lafayette at Burlington.

The Odd Fellows Hall located on the top floor of the Hatch Block was purchased from R. F. Hatch, December 15, 1924.

Bristol Lodge members have always had a true community spirit, working always for the betterment of the community, sponsoring and lending whatever help possible to other local activities.

**Onawa Rebekah Lodge** — In the year 1900 on the 30th of October a charter was granted to Onawa Rebekah Lodge No. 43 and the Lodge was instituted on that date. Members names appear on the charter as follows:

R. F. Hatch  
Mrs. Frances Hatch  
F. T. Briggs  
Mrs. Mable Briggs  
Carrie E. Patterson

Bertha Stewart  
P. J. Bristol  
Mrs. P. J. Bristol  
N. D. Bissonet  
E. N. Dike

At this meeting Grand Lodge Officers were present and conferred the degree on twenty nine candidates after which officers were elected for the following year. Mrs. Hatch was elected Noble Grand and Alice Sumner, Vice Grand.

In the years that followed the membership increased rapidly. Much of this prosperity was due to the cooperation and enthusiasm shown by the members.

The records show that in 1902 Mr. Hatch gave the use of the hall to the Lodge for the two years previous so that they might start the third year free from debt.

During the years that followed Mr. and Mrs. Hatch found many opportunities to be of help to the Order in which they were interested. Mr. Hatch was Degree Master for many years.

The first District meeting to be held in Bristol was in 1905. Mrs. Alice Sumner Sherwin was the District Deputy President.

A Tri Theta Rho Girls Club was instituted May 5, 1951 with fifteen Charter Members. This was the third club to be instituted in the State. Its purpose is to teach unselfishness and patriotism, to encourage mental and physical development, and that obedience to the law is necessary to the preservation of government and the protection of home and country. This club is affiliated with the Onawa Rebekah Lodge.

## Interesting Spots

**Lord's Prayer Rock** — When Joseph C. Greene was a boy and lived at South Starksboro, one of his tasks was to take the logs from the mountain top to the sawmill in Bristol. The Nine Bridge Road, or Drake Woods Road, in those days was a terrific ride. Not only were there nine bridges to cross, but the logs were big and apt to slide off. When he arrived at the "Big Rock," he knew his problems were over, so he said a little prayer, and breathed a sigh of relief knowing he would once more get his logs to the mill safely.

Years later, when he was a practicing physician in Buffalo, New York, he and his brother Dr. S. S. Greene, took a trip around the world, and after seeing the hieroglyphics in Egypt, he decided to come home



and have the Lord's Prayer chiseled on the rock that had given him peace of mind and a feeling of security when he was a boy so many years ago.

This was told by his daughter, Mrs. Julia Greene Willard (Mrs. Frederick B.) of Buffalo, New York to his granddaughter Juliet Greene Willard.

**Money Diggings** — The story of the buried treasure at the foot of the South Mountain in Bristol starts about 1800 when an old Spaniard, named DeGrau, appeared in Bristol. Having procured the necessary supplies he took up his residence near the foot of South Mountain where he began digging among the rocks. At first he refused to account for himself, but when forced he claimed that as a small boy he accompanied his father and a group of other people to this same spot where they mined a quantity of silver bars. When winter came they had to leave but had no way of transporting the silver so they secreted it in a nearby cave which they closed up with stones and clay. They were to return the next year but events occurred which prevented their ever returning. They were now all dead except DeGrau and he had come to claim the treasure. His story seemed accurate in detail and he spent some time digging, but he finally became discouraged and left, saying that he must have been mistaken in the location.

A few years later an odd looking vessel was found near this spot and some people thought that it might have belonged to the party that DeGrau told about. From that time on various parties started digging there, one group would give up discouraged and another would begin. About 1840 a group of a dozen men came from the Canadian Border and began to work with system and diligence. They formed a stock company, inviting the public to join them. Every dollar that a person invested in the company entitled him to \$100 worth of the treasure, when it was found. The leading spirit of the enterprise was a man named Simeon Corser, who, being a salesman of great ability, talked many people into buying stock. This group worked 12 years on the project and spent \$10,000 tunnelling in the rock but finally gave it up as hopeless. In 1860 Corser came back but gave up after two months digging.

To Franklin Harvey who died in 1893 that was the end of the story, but that people are still gullible regarding buried treasure is shown by fact that in 1934 a man from the nearby town of New Haven went to the same spot, where he began digging and dynamiting until little remains of the original cave and the excavations made by the party who started digging there in 1840. This man did not go to conjurors for advice, as did the early seekers, but used a "divining rod" which he believed would find the treasure for him. This man's luck was the same as that of all the previous searchers and there is little doubt that DeGrau was mistaken in his site, for silver has never been found in this vicinity.

**Rattlesnake Den** — Near the center of the west side of South Mountain, not far above the "Money Diggings," is an area of several acres of what appears from a distance to be smooth, naked rock but on closer inspection proves to be a mass of broken stones piled promiscuously upon one another as if heaped by some giant hand. This heap of stones can be seen from Bristol Flats and other places in Bristol and adjoining towns. In early days it was thickly infested with rattlesnakes and consequently has always borne the name of "Rattlesnake

Den."

In the early days people in Bristol and adjoining towns made a practice of hunting the snakes early in the spring when they first came out of their dens to curl themselves upon the warm rocks in the warm rays of the sun. At this season they are very sluggish and are easily captured. It was not uncommon for a hundred or more to be killed in a day. A letter from John Stewart of Royalton, Ohio, son of Samuel Stewart, one of the very first settlers in Bristol, states that his father with Captain Cyprian Eastman, Captain Gurdon Munson and a few others whose names he had forgotten once went to the den in the spring of the year and killed 180 snakes. They were piled up like a cock of hay after they were killed and left there as at that time no use was made of their skins.

The work of the early settlers in killing the rattlesnakes was very effective for it has been over 100 years since any of these snakes have been seen in Bristol.

**Barker Charcoal Kiln** — Midway between the Money Diggings and Rattlesnake Den, at the foot of South Mountain, lies the ruins of the Barker charcoal kiln, so-called from the small stream of that name on which it was situated. The usual method of obtaining charcoal was to heap the hardwood to be burned in a large pile on the ground and pack the earth all around it before firing it. It was a very arduous task as the current of air entering the kiln had to be regulated and the fire watched constantly. The Barker kiln was more extensive than the usual type being a stone enclosure, laid up with mortar, about 10 feet high and 20 feet square. Openings the size of bricks were made on all four sides for drafts and bricks kept on hand to fill these openings when it was necessary to close the drafts. The south side of this kiln is still in almost perfect condition and is an interesting place to visit when one is in the vicinity.

**The Cobble Cave** — In the extreme south part of the town a short distance from the Middlebury line is a large round hill known as "The Cobble" which stands considerably above the surrounding land. On the south side of this hill and near the top is a barrel shaped cave which is often visited. The entrance to this cave is very narrow, but after one has forced his way through it he enters a large room where the remains of a limestone stalactite can be seen, which was long ago broken off and carried away. This cave is very easy to reach as it is a short distance from Route 116.

**Burnham's Falls and Drake Woods** — Burnham's Falls, in Drake Woods is also a point of interest. Orin Burnham owned and operated one of the early forges in Bristol just above these falls. This forge did not do well and Mr. Burnham became depressed as a result of which he committed suicide by jumping over the falls which have been known ever since as Burnham's Falls.

There was at that time no road through Drake Woods and the ore, which was mined in Crown Point, New York, was drawn by ox team over a long road which wound around through Starksboro before reaching the forge. At last a road was opened through these woods and there is a story that to celebrate this event Mr. Drake, the proprietor of a public house on the Starksboro road adjacent to the newly opened road, gave a party to which he invited the public. Here rum flowed freely and before the night was over the merry-makers had thrown



made  
y first  
eks in  
h and  
more  
to, sort  
states  
Mur  
to the  
e piled  
t that  
s was  
snakes  
gs and  
of the  
name  
narcoal  
ground  
arduous  
ed and  
tensive  
about  
s were  
l these  
th side  
resting  
a short  
s "The  
On the  
which  
at after  
ere the  
ng ag  
h as it  
Drake  
operated  
s forge  
result of  
h hav  
and the  
a by on  
o before  
e wood  
oprietor  
opene  
n flow  
throw



Lake Winona (Bristol Pond)

Mr. Drake into the fireplace fortunately without causing him any harm. It was due to this celebration, so generously provided by Mr. Drake, that this section received the name of Drake Woods.

## Recreation

**Bristol Recreation Club** — Baseball has formed an integral part of the recreational life of Bristol ever since the close of the Civil War. A team known as the Mountaineers were playing games during the 1870's. For seven years they were undefeated and won the state championship at Essex Junction. In the '90's the Bristols, a semi-professional team rocketed to fame under the management of Hoyt Landon.

The home grounds of the Mountaineers was our present park which was then used chiefly as a grazing ground. The ball field where the Bristols played was Riverside Park, on the south side of New Haven River across from the Basin, a plot now overgrown with trees. This park was reached by means of a footbridge which was so often washed out by high waters that the field was finally abandoned. Several places were tried after this but were found unsatisfactory. The need of a recreation field became acute about 1922 and the Recreation Club was then formed and bought the land, consisting of about 13 acres, which is the present recreation field. In 1923 work was begun on the field under the direction of V. I. Patnode, chairman of the grounds committee, to make a baseball diamond and lay out two tennis courts. R. C. Martin, Ralph Shadrick, B. W. Estey and Ford Thomas are among the charter members deserving credit for the progress. The task was a hard one for boulders and stumps had to be blasted out, debris removed and fill-ins made. Water was piped onto the field, the grounds were wired for electricity and the bleachers were built. The original grandstand was destroyed by high wind and replaced by the present one.

This field now serves the High School for its contests of baseball, soccer, football, etc., as well as provides tennis courts and ice-skating rink for community use.

The Club is maintained by membership dues and an annual donation of \$300.00 from the town and village. In conjunction with the Legion, the Recreation Club sponsors a Fourth of July celebration which is known as the County A-fair, lasting three or four days and the proceeds are equally divided between the two clubs.

The Bristol Riding Club was organized January 7, 1955 under the leadership of Mrs. Juna Perlee, with 16 members. In the spring of 1956 with the help of interested townspeople, the members built a riding ring on the north east corner of the recreation field on Liberty St. They held their first junior horse show May 6, 1956 and it was so successful they have continued to have one each spring and fall. Around 80 horses of various sizes, breeds and types are entered, coming from many parts of Vermont and neighboring New York state. With the money they earn from the shows and also from pony rides they are able to truck their horses to other shows. The members enjoy trail rides and participate in local parades.

**Airport** — At a special Town Meeting held in Bristol, January 25, 1934, the legal voters appropriated a sum of money for the construction of an airport and authorized the selectmen to purchase a tract of land for same. The location was acquired from the following people, Spencer Lawrence, Ira Stewart, Bristol Recreation Club, John A. Kilbourn,



Ruby Gilmore, Frank Duprey, Celia Jimmo, Village of Bristol and Peter Cousino. This was a total of 45.68 acres which cost \$2,673.41.

The town alone has expended the sum of \$6,029.45 for labor and supplies in construction of the airport, while the WPA project of the Federal Government up to December, 1939, had expended \$26,000. On November 9, 1939, a new WPA appropriation of \$24,750 was allocated to be expended on the field.

It was planned to have four runways, but only the north and south runway of 2,200 feet in length was ever finished and is the one in use today.

Pilot Joseph Rock operated a private flying course for students beginning July, 1936. He trained 86 students the first year, using a Taylor Cub 50 H. P. Model. In the year 1939 the Private Flying Division of the U. S. Civil Aeronautics Authority granted a quota of 20 students to Middlebury College to train for private flying. This class trained with Mr. Rock at the Bristol Airport as Middlebury had no flying field at that time. By December 18, 1939, twelve of the twenty students including two girls had soloed. Among the number were six Vermont boys. Miss Dale of Rochester, N. Y. was the first girl in New England to solo under this instruction sponsored by the Private Flying Division of the C. A. A.

In 1946 it was estimated there were 6,844 take-offs and landings in the field made by local and visiting planes. Eleven private and two commercial ratings were issued. That year the Bristol Airport was one of the seventy Airports in the whole United States to receive Good Airport Operation Private Certificate.

At one time there were five buildings connected with the Airport. One of these was taken over by the town for storage space. The Administration Building is now being used for a Teen Age Community Center under adult supervision.

The Airport is under the management and care of the Bristol selectmen.

**Bristol Pond, Lake Winona** — Bristol Pond which is located at the base of Hogback Mountain about three miles north of the village played an important part in the early history of Bristol. Undoubtedly of glacial origin it now covers approximately 200 acres, but at a much earlier period of geological history it must have been one of the larger and deeper lakes in this section of the state. Proof of this is found in the extensive swamp and marsh, bounding the lake on three sides, which doubtless was at one time part of the pond and must have added several acres to its area. Vegetable matter has washed from the nearby hills until the basin is nearly filled with it.

The first camp was built soon after 1900, on the northeast corner, by David Bosworth and Charles Mathewson of Bristol. Due to their hospitality the camp was often used by their friends for fishing, duck hunting and picnics. After some years the camp became uninhabitable for camping and about 1930 was destroyed by fire.

Due to the swamp condition the pond at first was badly infested with water snakes. This perhaps hindered the development of the pond as a recreation area. At the present time few snakes are seen. Perhaps the beaver should be thanked for this as the dams they built raised the water level of the pond by two feet. This also greatly improved the fishing where today many kinds of fish are found including Northern pike, perch, bull pouts and an abundance of sun fish.

For many years the Johnson Lumber Company of Bristol cut lumber off the east or mountain side of the lake. This necessitated building good logging roads to the pond both from the north and south. The road from the north was the old county road.

Some few years ago John Davis of Bristol bought all the land on the east, that bordered on the lake, from the Johnson Lumber Company. Since that time he has sold building lots to a group of people, mostly residents of Bristol who plan to build camps. Some of these already have built their docks and one even has a large sun deck. This group has already made major improvements in the road from the north. They have also made application to the local electric company to run a power line in so that each camp might have electricity.

A group of local sportsmen are endeavoring to have the Vermont Fish and Game Service build an access road to the lake so that boats may be launched and a parking lot provided. At the present time they are exploring the possibilities of doing this.

The name of Bristol Pond was changed to Lake Winona by act of the legislature. The act became effective February 17, 1931, but the pond is still known to local residents by its original name.

---

We want to thank the many who have helped in compiling this, the Second Edition of the Bristol History. Some have helped by writing articles while others have loaned books and pictures that we have used for references and information.

We hope the book will be useful and enjoyable for many years to come.



l cur  
tat  
outh

lan  
Com  
eople  
thes  
deck  
from  
ectric  
ricity  
rmon  
boat  
time

act of  
at the

y this  
riting  
e used

ars to

